BLADE COMICS

レイン 7

原作 吉野 匠
漫画 住川 惠

MAG Garden

シャンドリス軍とは同盟が締結。残党と化したサフィール軍・貴族連合軍。
最期にはサフィール自らがレインと一騎打ちをし、騎士として散るのだった。
隣国を巻き込んだ覇権戦争は、こうして終結した。
終戦はしたもののシェルファは床に臥せ、城の空気は沈み込む。
そこに勃発する謎の幽霊騒動。そして現れたのは…。

7

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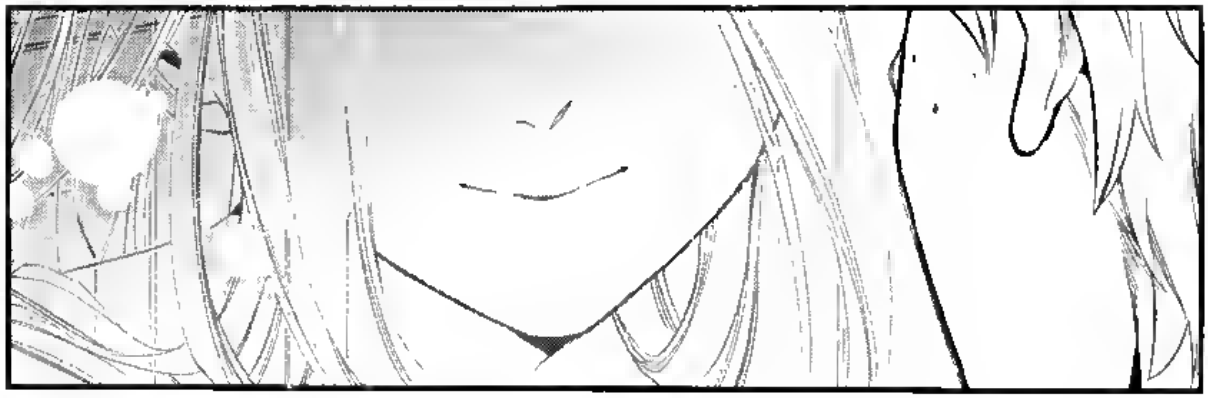
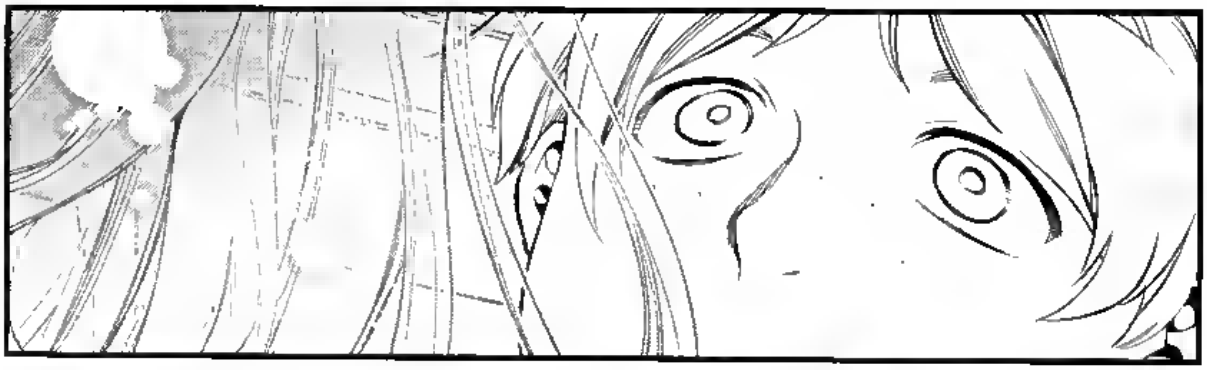
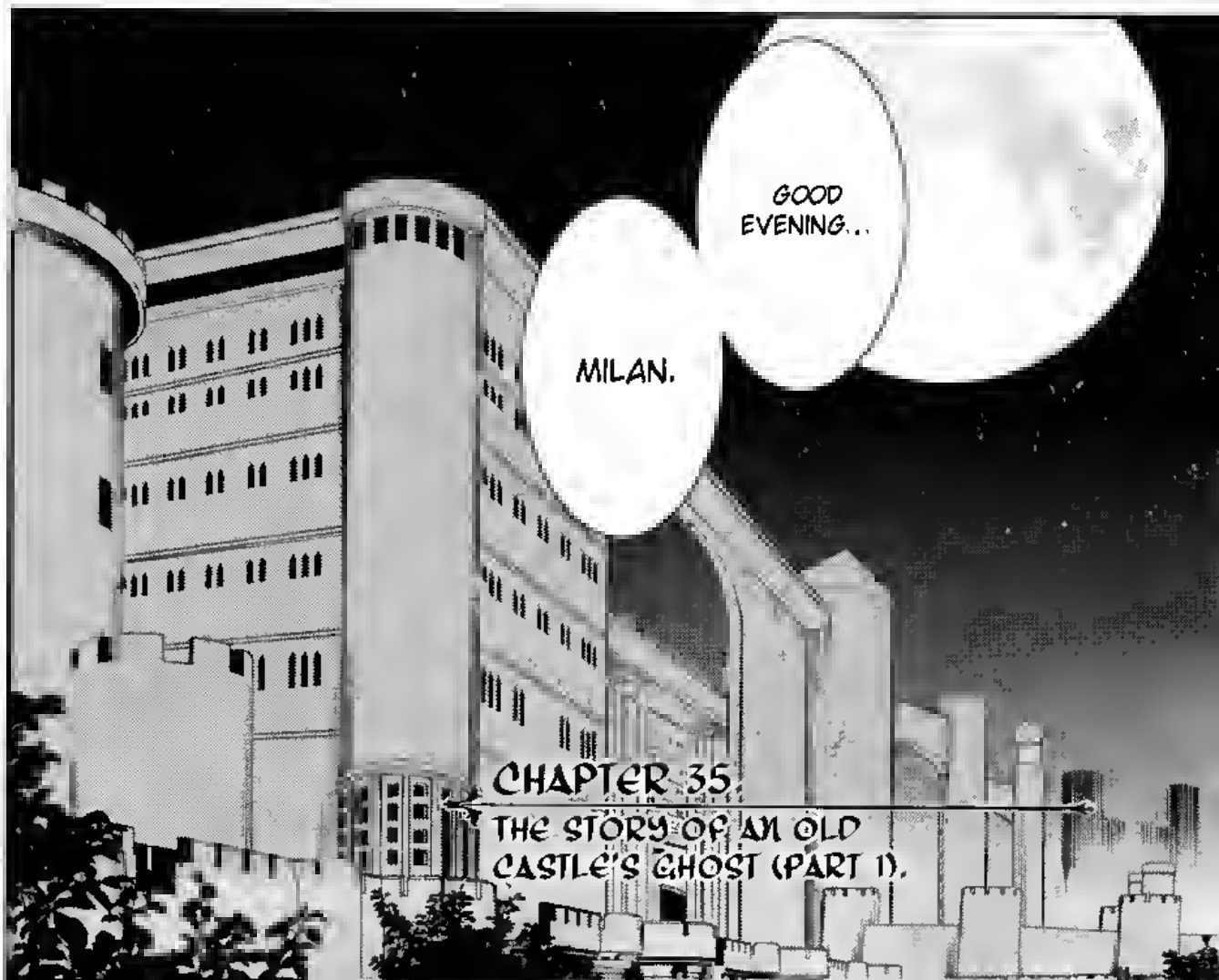
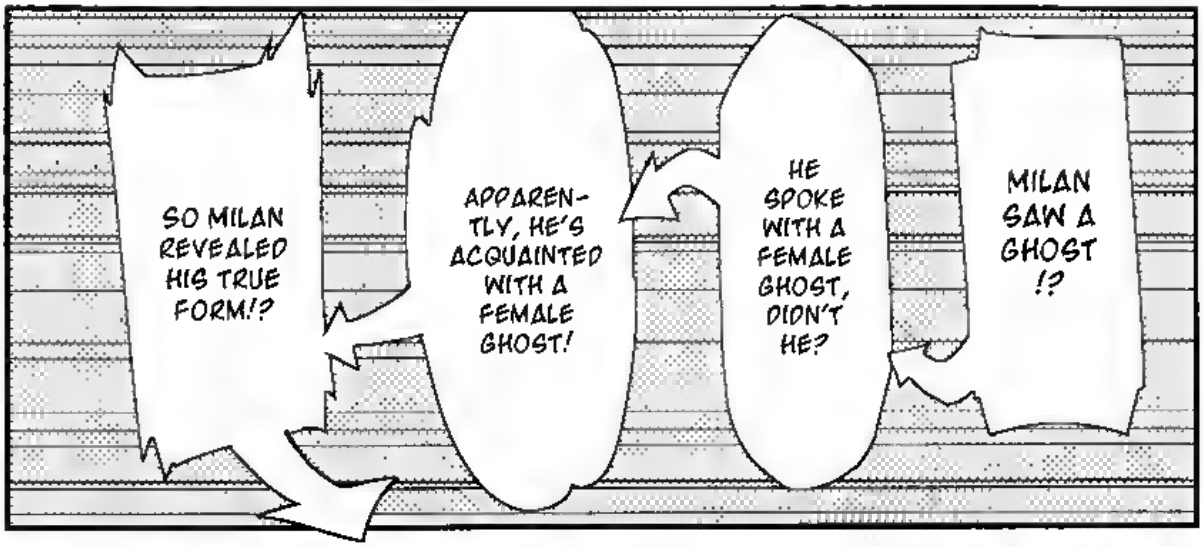
CHAPTER 40. BEGINNING OF A NEW AGE.

ガヤ…
ガヤ…
ガヤ
ガヤ
B-BUT, CAPTAIN...
THE GUARDS ON PATROL YESTERDAY TOLD US THAT THEY SAW A SHADOW MOVING ABOUT ON THE ROOF JUST UP AHEAD.
IT'S A GHOST!
WOULD YOU STOP BEING SO TENSE?
THE CIVIL WAR IS ALREADY OVER, SO IT'S ALRIGHT NOW.
THERE'LL ALSO BE THE CORONATION CEREMONY ONCE THE PRINCESS WAKES UP, YOU KNOW
IF SUCH RUMOR IS BEING SPREAD AROUND, THEN WE SHOULD PROBABLY CHECK THE PLACE FOR SUSPICIOUS PEOPLE.
THEY PROBABLY MISTOOK IT FOR SOMETHING ELSE.



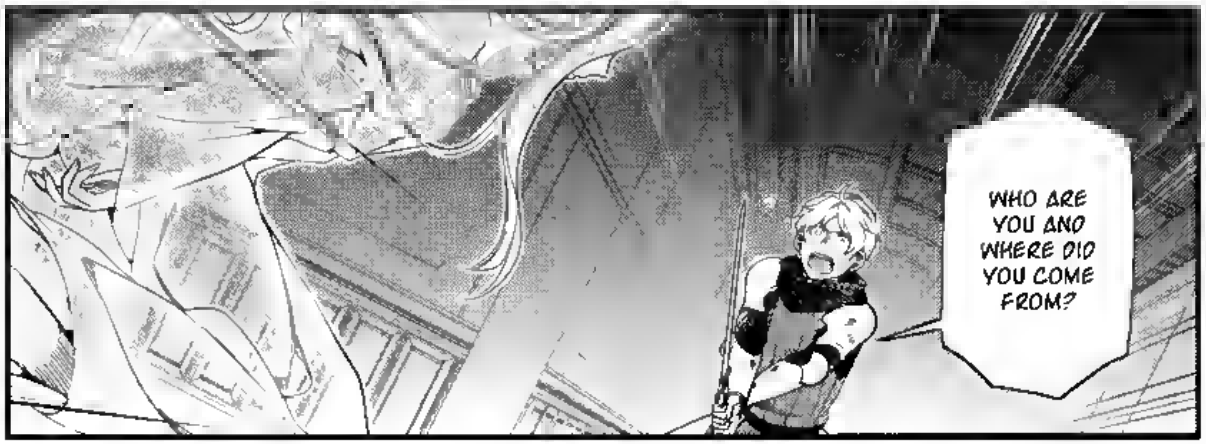



GOOD EVENING...
MILAN.
CHAPTER 35
THE STORY OF AN OLD CASTLE'S GHOST (PART 1).


MILAN SAW A GHOST!?
HE SPOKE WITH A FEMALE GHOST, DIDN'T HE?
APPARENTLY, HE'S ACQUAINTED WITH A FEMALE GHOST!
SO MILAN REVEALED HIS TRUE FORM!?

I'VE HEARD ABOUT IT, MILAN!
JOANNE, THE GHOST OF THE WOMAN WHOM YOU MADE A PROMISE TO AS CHILDHOOD FRIENDS TO GET MARRIED, ONLY TO BE ABANDONED BY YOU AT THE PEAK OF HER LOVE-LIFE, WHICH FORCED HER TO COMMIT SUICIDE, APPEARED!?
AND YET HER BOYFRIEND HERE HAD THREE OTHER WOMEN PREGNANT...
NO WONDER JOANNE WAS CURSING TO KILL HIM.
WHO THE HECK IS THAT!?

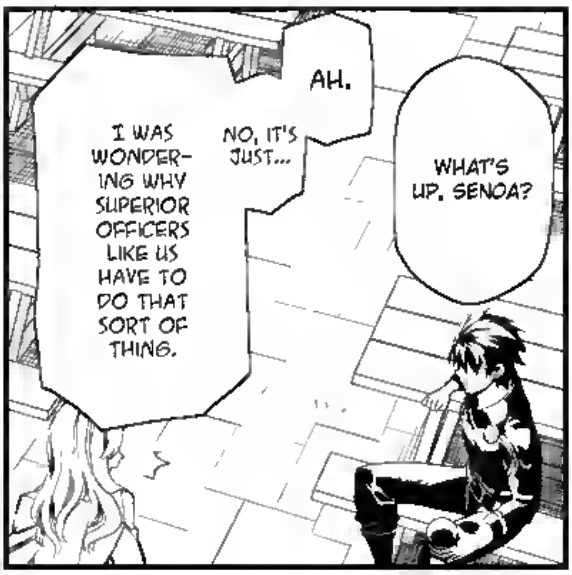
I'M SORRY
I'VE NEVER EVEN HELD A GIRL'S HAND BEFORE.
IT'S NOT!
IT'S NOT BECAUSE YOU REMEMBERED SOMETHING AND CHOSE TO HIDE IT INSTEAD, I HOPE?
SO IT WAS A RUMOR AFTER ALL.
YES.
SHE DID TALK TO ME...
FOR SOME REASON, THE GHOST KNOWS THE NAME "MILAN".
BUT THE THING ABOUT A "GHOST" IS TRUE, HUH?
W-WHAT ARE YOU?

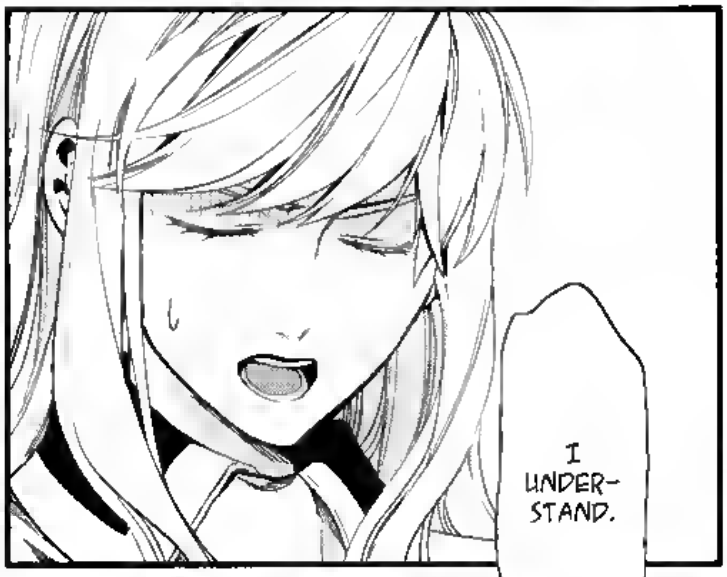


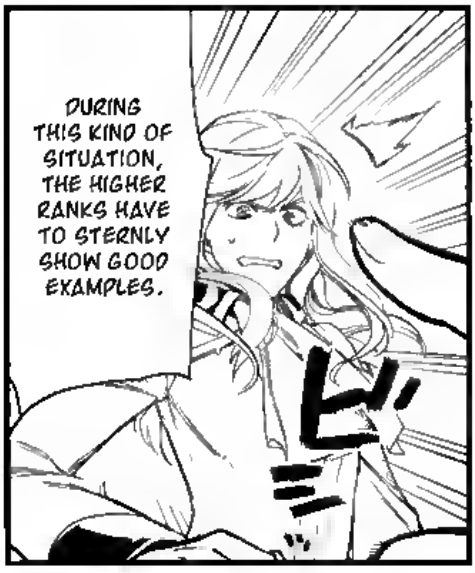
There's no way a human being can be a match for me.

G...
GEN-
ERAL...
HO~
I see...
Even though she knows my personality well...
EH.
GUNTHER WILL PATROL THE COURT-YARD AND EACH OFFICER WILL TAKE THE INITIATIVE TO PATROL THE CASTLE GROUND.
I'LL HAVE GASARAM TAKE CARE OF THE PRINCESS.
OKAY THEN, I SHALL RESPOND TO HER EXPECTATIONS ACCORDINGLY. I WILL PATROL THE ROOF TONIGHT.

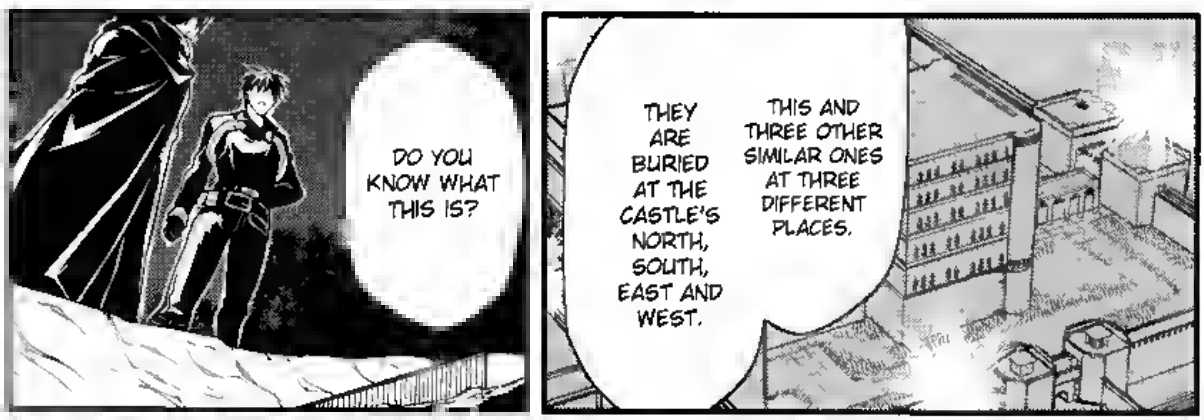
I have a stomach-ache.
I have a back-ache.
I have a tummy-ache.
I have a head-ache.
IF YOU WANT A REASON FOR IT, MORE AND MORE PEOPLE ARE MAKING UP EXCUSES NOT TO DO THEIR DUTIES, WHICH ARE AFFECTING THE MORALE OF THE TROOPS.

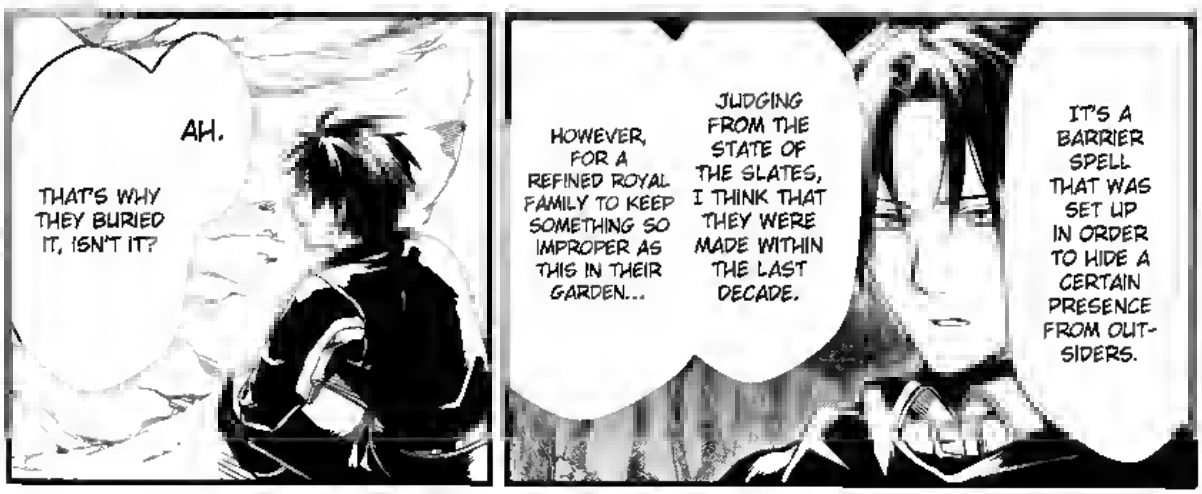

WHAT'S UP, SENOA?
AH.
NO, IT'S JUST...
I WAS WONDERING WHY SUPERIOR OFFICERS LIKE US HAVE TO DO THAT SORT OF THING.

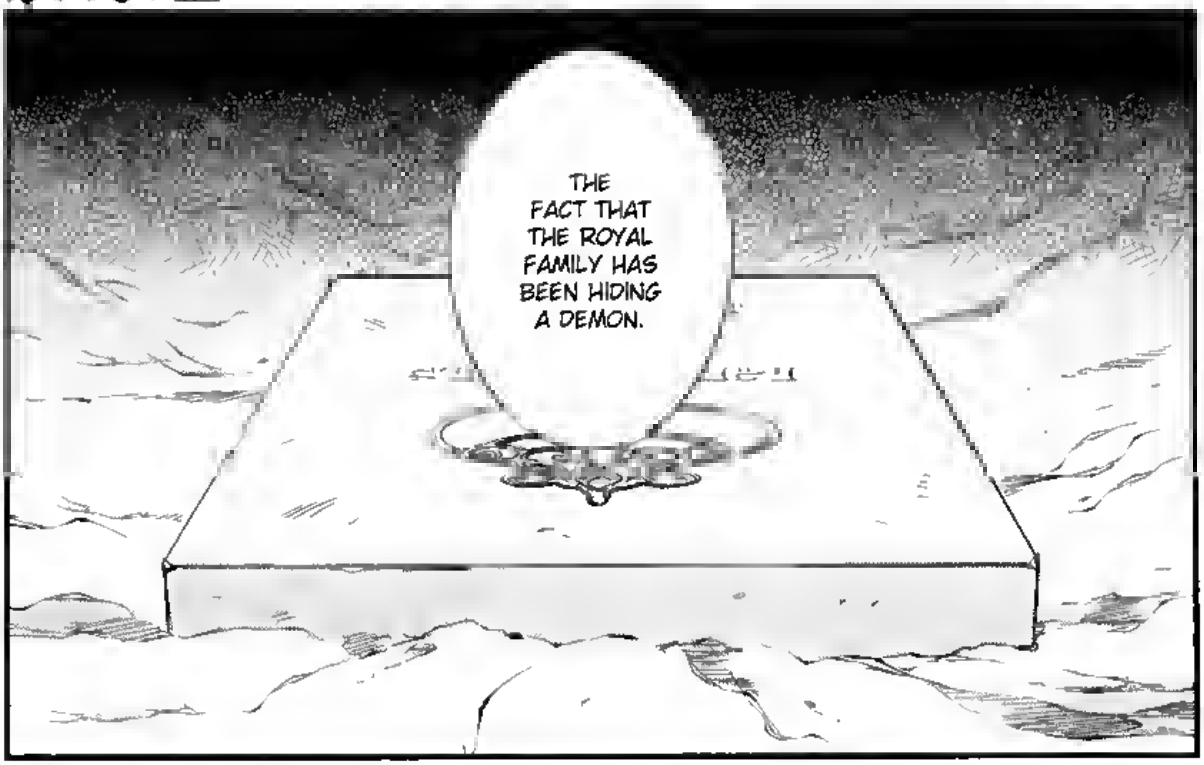

I UNDERSTAND.

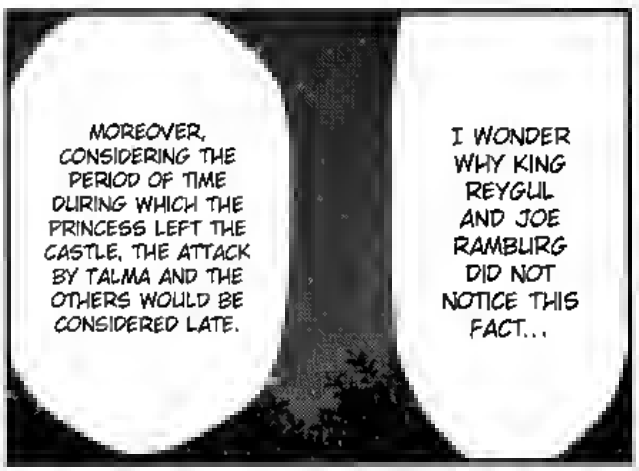

DURING THIS KIND OF SITUATION, THE HIGHER RANKS HAVE TO STERNLY SHOW GOOD EXAMPLES.

HOW ARE THINGS GOING WITH TALMAR'S CLUE?
IT'S AS YOU PREDICTED, LORD RAIN.

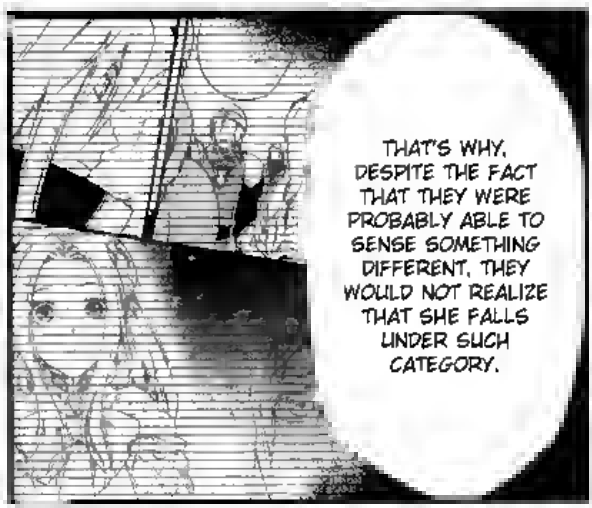

DO YOU KNOW WHAT THIS IS?
THIS AND THREE OTHER SIMILAR ONES AT THREE DIFFERENT PLACES.
THEY ARE BURIED AT THE CASTLE'S NORTH, SOUTH, EAST AND WEST.


AH.
THAT'S WHY THEY BURIED IT, ISN'T IT?
HOWEVER, FOR A REFINED ROYAL FAMILY TO KEEP SOMETHING SO IMPROPER AS THIS IN THEIR GARDEN...
JUDGING FROM THE STATE OF THE SLATES, I THINK THAT THEY WERE MADE WITHIN THE LAST DECADE.
IT'S A BARRIER SPELL THAT WAS SET UP IN ORDER TO HIDE A CERTAIN PRESENCE FROM OUTSIDERS.


THE FACT THAT THE ROYAL FAMILY HAS BEEN HIDING A DEMON.

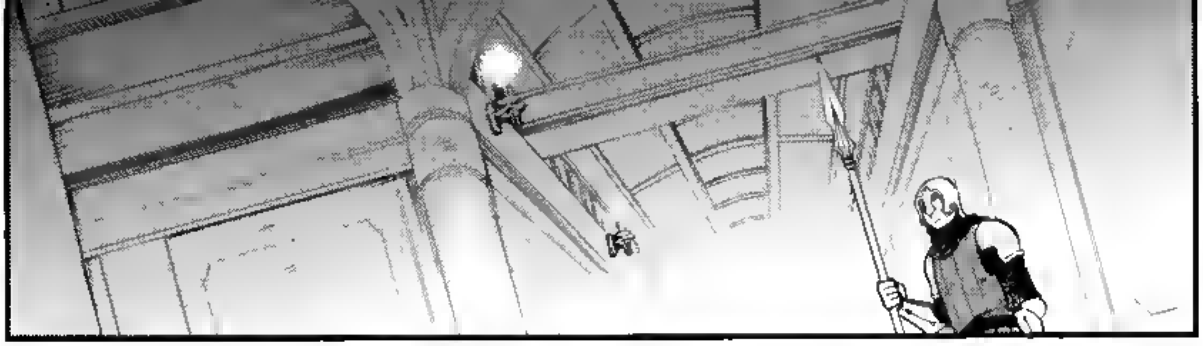

MOREOVER, CONSIDERING THE PERIOD OF TIME DURING WHICH THE PRINCESS LEFT THE CASTLE, THE ATTACK BY TALMA AND THE OTHERS WOULD BE CONSIDERED LATE.
I WONDER WHY KING REYGUL AND JOE RAMBURG DID NOT NOTICE THIS FACT...

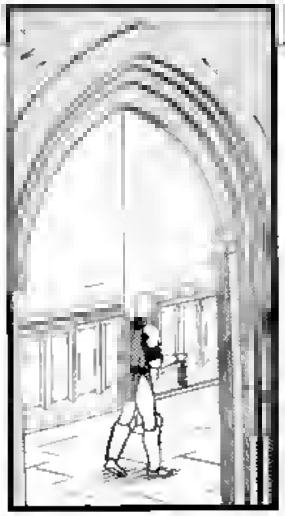
BUT, IT'S STRANGE.


THAT'S WHY, DESPITE THE FACT THAT THEY WERE PROBABLY ABLE TO SENSE SOMETHING DIFFERENT, THEY WOULD NOT REALIZE THAT SHE FALLS UNDER SUCH CATEGORY.

THAT'S BECAUSE THE SAME KIND OF MAGIC WAS PERFORMED ON THE LITTLE ONE'S REAL BODY AS WELL.

THOUGH I THINK THAT IT'S PROBABLY NO LONGER NECESSARY AT THIS RATE.
THE SEAL IS PROBABLY WEAK AT THIS STAGE.
HOWEVER, FROM THE SPIRITUAL PRESSURE THAT I SENSED SOMETIMES, AND FROM THE MOVEMENTS OF TALMA'S ORGANIZATION'S...
HOW DO YOU PLAN TO DO THIS?
PLEASE BURY THESE BACK LIKE BEFORE
AS LONG AS WE CAN FIGURE OUT THE PEOPLE WE ARE DEALING WITH, IT'S GOOD ENOUGH.





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YO!
TODAY SURE IS A NICE MOONLIT NIGHT.

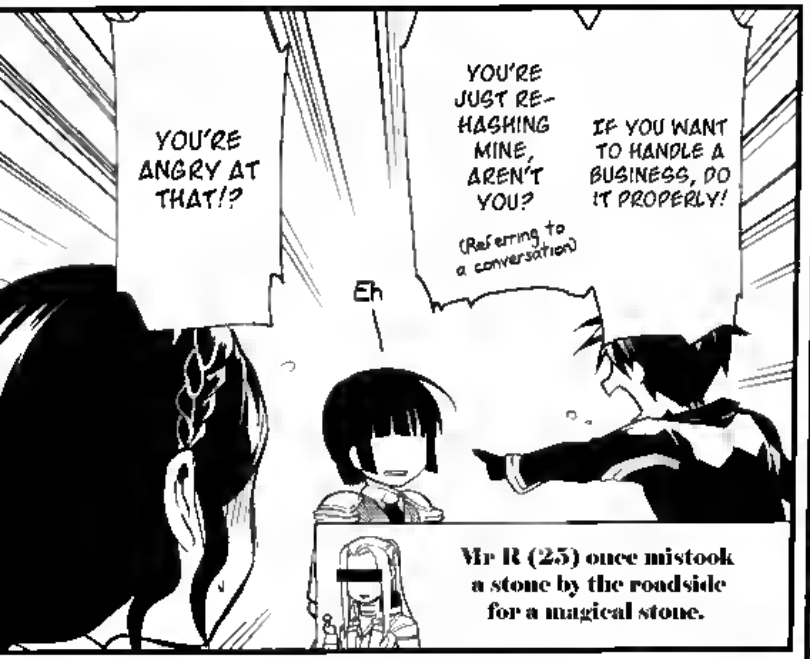
STOP APPROACHING ME WITH A KILLING INTENT.
I THOUGHT YOU WERE AN INTRUDER.
WELL, I ADMIT THAT IT'S NOT REALLY A PLEASANT HOBBY.
EVERYONE'S REACTIONS TO THAT WERE ALWAYS CRIES AND SCREAMS THAT IT'S LAUGHABLE. THOUGH, IT'S SUBCONSCIOUS.
YOURS IS DIFFERENT.

IT CAN'T BE HELPED THAT EVEN THOSE WHO WITHSTOOD SYANDRIS'S AND ZARMIN'S ELITE FORCES ARE AFRAID OF GHOSTS WHEN YOU CAN'T EVEN CUT THEM WITH A SWORD.
ABANDONING DUTIES IS DEFINITELY NOT AN ADMIRABLE ACTION, BUT...
STOP TEASING EVERYONE.
IT'S A TACTIC TO WEAKEN THE DEFENSES OF THIS CASTLE, HUH?
I SEE.
I DON'T THINK IT WILL ALLOW US THROUGH THAT EASILY.
NO, THIS TIME ROUND I DON'T HAVE ANY HIDDEN MOTIVES.
YOU SENT THE OFFICERS TO THEIR RESPECTIVE POSITIONS BECAUSE YOU THOUGHT OF THAT AS WELL, DIDN'T YOU?

WHAT?
THE RUMORED GHOST IS, IN A SENSE, THE REAL THING.
WELL, I'LL LEAVE THIS AREA TO YOU.
HEY, GUARD THIS PLACE MORE SERIOUSLY!
And they're slacking off, on top of that.
The one in charge of upstairs is Leni's troop...

おおおお
WELCOME, WELCOME!
WE'RE HAVING A SPECIAL SALE! GET A MAGICAL STONE THAT WILL PROTECT YOU FROM THE GHOST FOR JUST ONE COPPER COIN!

EH? GENERAL?
I WANT THREE!
I WANT ONE!


YOU'RE ANGRY AT THAT!?
YOU'RE JUST RE-HASHING MINE, AREN'T YOU?
(Referring to a conversation)
IF YOU WANT TO HANDLE A BUSINESS, DO IT PROPERLY!
Eh
Mr R (25) once mistook a stone by the roadside for a magical stone.

WHAT THE HECK ARE YOU DOING!

WE'VE FINALLY STOPPED THE INTERNAL CONFLICT, YET THE PRINCESS IS STILL BEDRIDDEN. NOT TO MENTION THAT THE ATMOSPHERE IN THE CASTLE IS BECOMING SO TENSE.
AS IF IT'S NOT ENOUGH, A GHOST HAS TO APPEAR AND EVERYONE WON'T STOP PANICKING.

NOT YOU TOO, SELPHIE...
WELL, I WAS TAKING A SHORT BREAK, BUT...
BUT...
You're part of my corps, aren't you?

YUURI...
I SEE.

THAT'S WHY I THOUGHT THAT THIS WOULD AT LEAST SOOTH THINGS A LITTLE.

BUT YOUR BREASTS LOOK LIKE THEY ARE GETTING SEIZURES.
ギュッ ミシミシ
IT'S JUST MY PERIOD.
I'M NOT GOING TO ACKNOWLEDGE SUCH HARD AND HUGE BREASTS!
YUURI...

ARE YOU ALRIGHT!?
I-I-I-I-IT'S...
ガ
ガガ
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A LIFELESS BLUE FACE LOITERING AROUND!
SHE HAS TWO FIREBALLS WITH HER.
IT'S OUT!
ON TOP!

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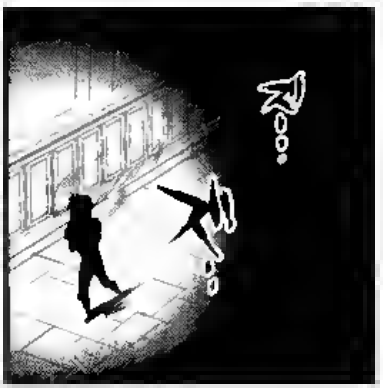
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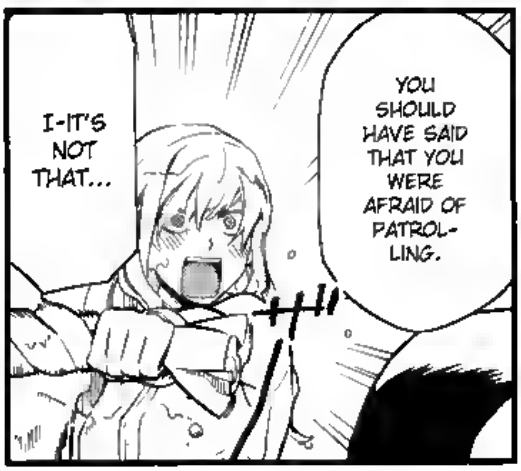
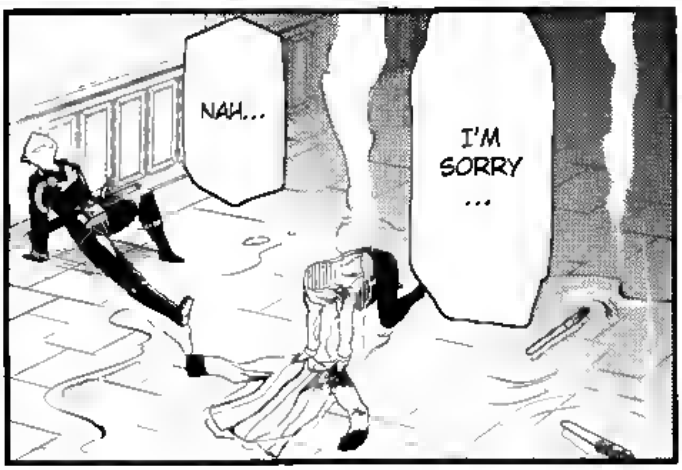
KYAAAAA!!
OI.
CALM DOWN! IT'S ME!
BEGONE, YOU EVIL SPIRIT!!
I'M SORRY ...
MAN, CAN YOU STOP CREATING CONFU-SION...
GEN-ERAL!?

OH, HEY!
GYA AA!!!

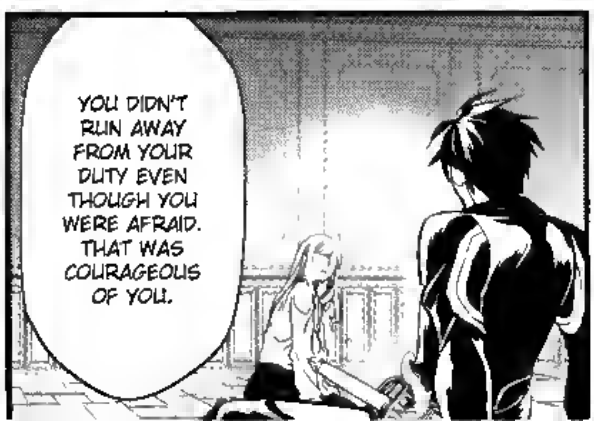
ガバッ


I-IT'S NOT THAT...
YOU SHOULD HAVE SAID THAT YOU WERE AFRAID OF PATROL-LING.


NAH...
I'M SORRY ...

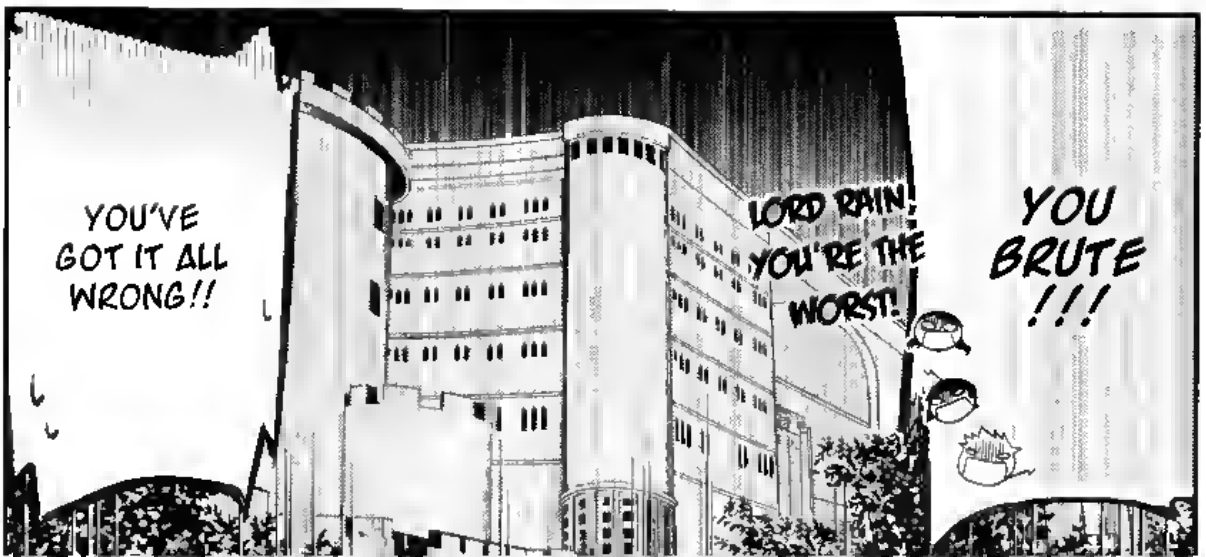
THANK YOU... VERY MUCH...

THERE'S NOTHING EMBAR-RASSING ABOUT BEING AFRAID.
I'VE TOLD YOU BEFORE.


YOU DIDN'T RUN AWAY FROM YOUR DUTY EVEN THOUGH YOU WERE AFRAID. THAT WAS COURAGEOUS OF YOU.

IT'S LADY SENOA'S VOICE!
THIS WAY!
I'M PERFECTLY FINE.
NO.
AH.
Let me see.
MORE IMPORTANTLY, YOU DIDN'T HURT YOURSELF, DID YOU?

ARE YOU ALRIGHT, MISS SENOA?
WHAT WAS THAT SCREAM JUST NOW!?

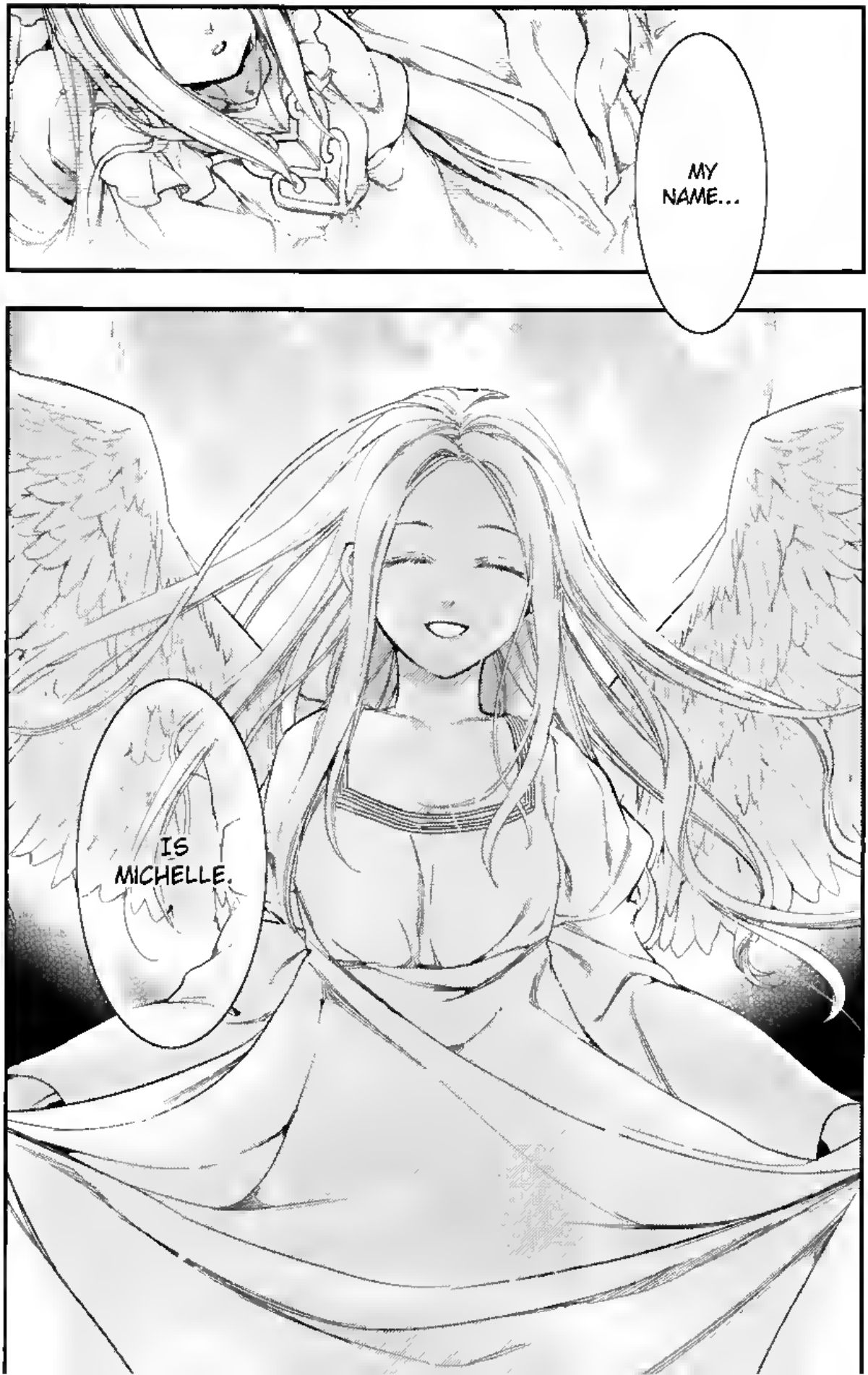

YOU'VE GOT IT ALL WRONG!!
LORD RAIN, YOU'RE THE WORST!
YOU BRUTE!!!

THERE'S NO WAY I COULD FORGET SUCH AN INTENSE EXPERIENCE...
OF COURSE!
DO YOU REMEMBER ANY SPECIAL FEATURES ABOUT THE GHOST YOU ENCOUNTERED?
OH YEAH, MILAN.
Blah blah, such and such
I THOUGHT I REMEMBERED HER FACIAL EXPRESSION AND HER VOICE...
EH?
ONE DAY, YOU'LL FORGET EVERYTHING...
?
SHE DID SOMETHING TO MAKE YOU FORGET LITTLE BY LITTLE.
I SEE ...

"One day, I'll definitely meet the young boy in black from my dream"
I couldn't reciprocate to that voice filled with so much confidence.
YES!
DID THAT BIG BROTHER HELP YOU OUT?

This child is special.
The strange dreams she's been telling me about... they are not mere dreams.
She needs an ally.
An ally who will understand and accept the entity living within her.
The black swordsman who's stronger and kinder than anyone else.
If you can be that person ...
One way or the other ...

You would be able to accept...
Everything as it is.
I THINK THIS IS THE SECOND TIME YOU GAVE ME A NAME.
WHAT!?
ME?
YOU'RE FINALLY OUT, JOANNA.


MY NAME...
IS MICHELLE.

RAIN

Sense Scans

www.sensescans.com
#Sense@irc.irchighway.net

Raws : Sense-Scans
Translator : zkein
Proofreader : Frogmage
Cleaner : Minty & theusergame
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CHAPTER 36.

THE STORY OF AN OLD CASTLE'S GHOST. (PART 2)

FOR A LONG TIME, I'VE ONLY JUST BEEN WATCHING THINGS.
I'M REALLY GLAD I WAS ABLE TO NAME MYSELF.

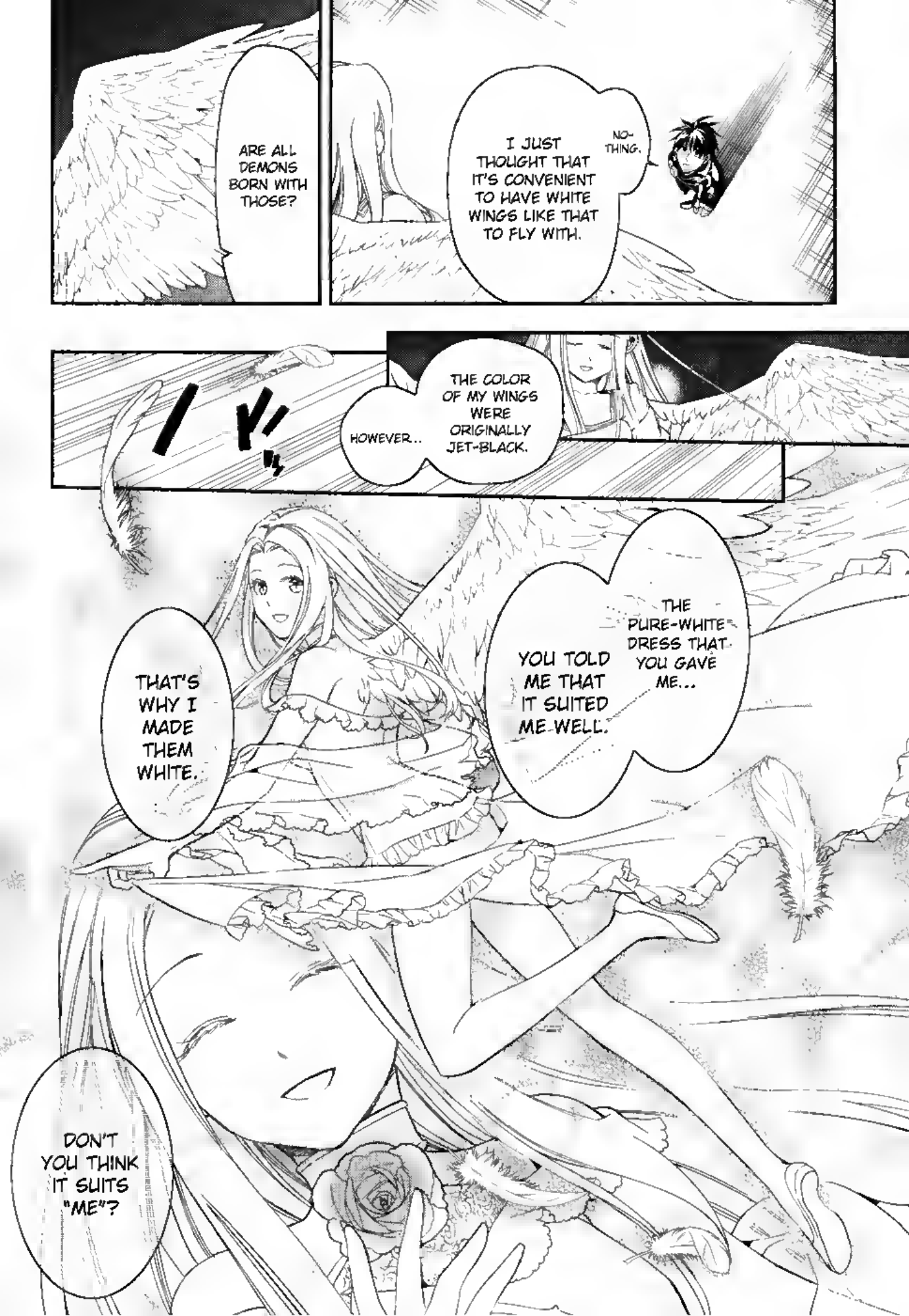
I WAS SO HAPPY THAT MY BODY WAS QUIVERING.
WHEN I MET YOU THREE YEARS AGO, AND ALSO DURING THE TIME I FLED TO YOUR CASTLE...

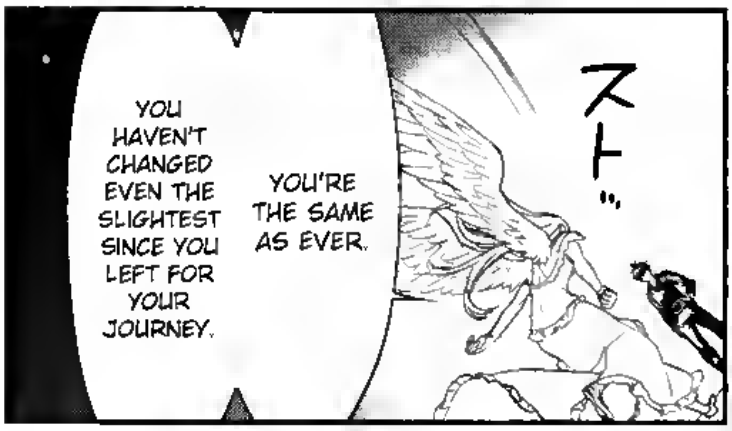
SO, IT WASN'T JUST A FALSE NAME.
MI-CHELLE ...

This is it.

?
But, this...
I don't sense any hostility, but her spiritual pressure is heavy and intimidating.
The one I've been sensing the entire time.

WHAT'S WRONG?


ARE ALL DEMONS BORN WITH THOSE?
I JUST THOUGHT THAT IT'S CONVENIENT TO HAVE WHITE WINGS LIKE THAT TO FLY WITH.
NO-THING.
HOWEVER..
THE COLOR OF MY WINGS WERE ORIGINALLY JET-BLACK.
THAT'S WHY I MADE THEM WHITE.
YOU TOLD ME THAT IT SUITED ME WELL.
THE PURE-WHITE DRESS THAT YOU GAVE ME...
DON'T YOU THINK IT SUITS "ME"?


YOU'RE THE SAME AS EVER.
YOU HAVEN'T CHANGED EVEN THE SLIGHTEST SINCE YOU LEFT FOR YOUR JOURNEY.
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I DON'T REALLY REMEMBER ...
THANK YOU.

ALWAYS DRESSING IN BLACK
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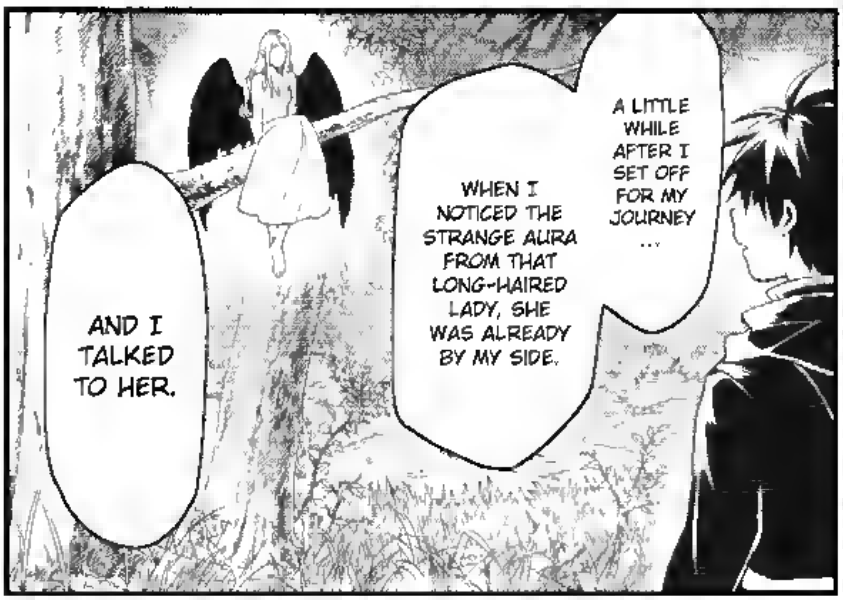

AND I TALKED TO HER.
WHEN I NOTICED THE STRANGE AURA FROM THAT LONG-HAIRED LADY, SHE WAS ALREADY BY MY SIDE.
A LITTLE WHILE AFTER I SET OFF FOR MY JOURNEY ...

SO THAT WAS THE TIME YOU APPEARED.

YOU RESIDE WITHIN THE LITTLE ONE, HUH.
I THINK IT'S BEEN ABOUT A DECADE SINCE THAT DAY.

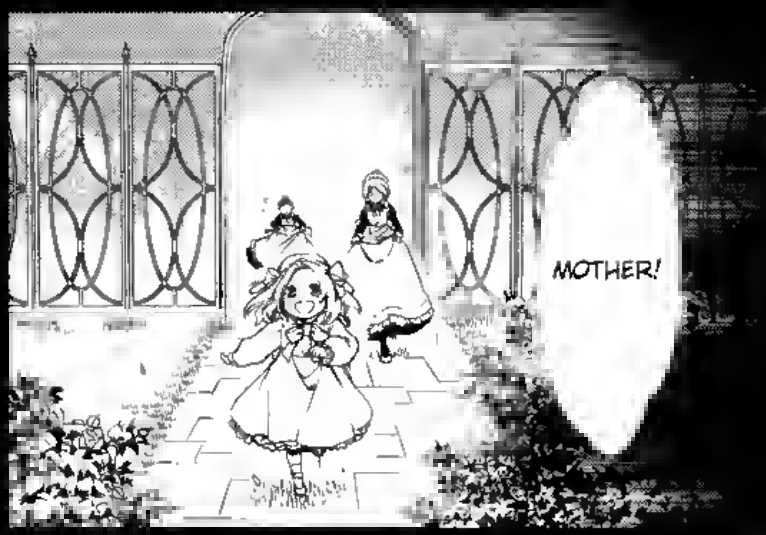
I was fully debilitated at that time.
SIXTEEN YEARS.
Because I wanted to live on, I temporarily discarded my physical body and assimilated into the fetus of a human being.
And the mother of that fetus was Queen Elenar.

BEFORE BIRTH, I WAS ONE WITH SHELFA.
YOU CAN THINK HOWEVER YOU WANT.
"A DIFFERENT PERSONALITY," "RESURRECTED," "ANOTHER SOUL"...

SO YOU KNEW.
SO IT WAS THANKS TO THE QUEEN'S TALENT IN MAGIC THAT IT WENT WELL, HUH.

A HALF DEMON LIKE JOE WAS ALREADY RARE TO BEGIN WITH... A DEMON AND A HUMAN MERGING INTO ONE IS...

IT'S A BIG DEAL.
FOR HER TO SET UP SUCH A LARGE BARRIER AROUND A SINGLE CASTLE IN SECRECY THROUGH INDEPENDENT AND THOROUGH STUDYING DESPITE THE SEVERE LACK OF KNOWLEDGE IN THE MAGIC THAT THIS COUNTRY POSSESSED...



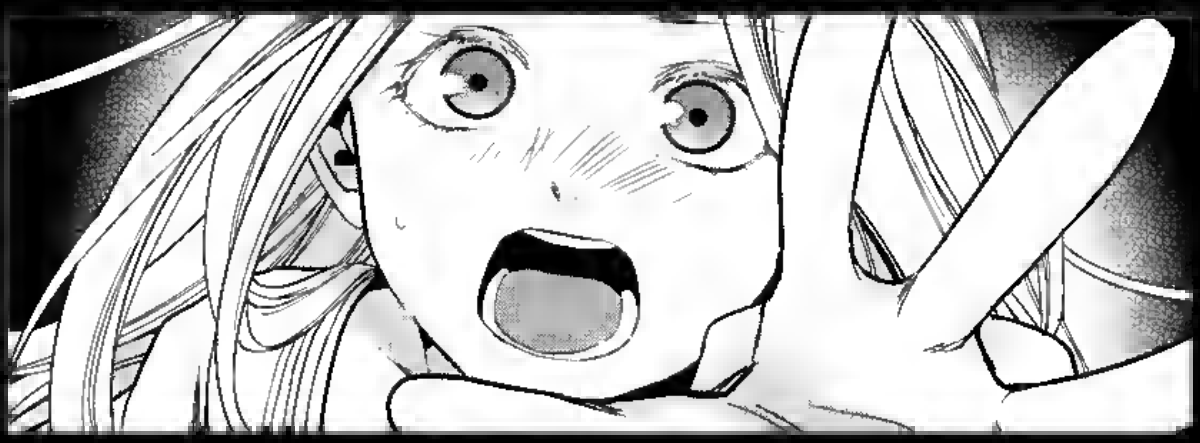
The moment I awoke was the same moment when strange things started surfacing from Shelfa's body.

BUT...
I'VE ALREADY TOLD FATHER...
YOU CANNOT TELL ANYONE ELSE OF YOUR STRANGE DREAMS.
SHELFA ...
ONLY A DEMON CAN POSSESS SUCH ABILITY.

Upon locking his daughter up within the castle, the King ceased to reveal his face to the public.
The queen then cast a spell on her daughter and the castle.
WITHIN.
THE ONLY COMFORT THAT CHILD HAD WAS HER KIND MOTHER AND THE VISIONS OF THE OUTSIDE WORLD.
I saw a lot of her dreams.

When the "Vision" power started manifesting, I saw a lot of dreams, but...

Before long, be it the present or the future, her dreams became centered on a single person.



RAIN!

I KNEW THAT IN THE NEAR FUTURE, SHELFA WOULD MEET THIS YOUNG MAN.
AND I INSTANTLY FLEW TO YOUR SIDE.

GRANDPA, LOOK!
HE GOT ME A PENDANT THAT SOMEONE DROPPED IN THE FOREST!
THAT'S GREAT, HANNA.
HE EVEN CHASED THE VIRGO CLAN AWAY.
RAIN IS REALLY AMAZING!
THAT WAS NOTHING MUCH.
MORE IMPORTANTLY, HANNA, IF YOU DON'T RETURN NOW, YOUR PARENTS WILL GET WORRIED.
I'LL SEE YOU OFF TILL THE BASE OF THE MOUNTAIN.
I WISH YOU WOULDN'T GO ON YOUR JOURNEY AND STAY HERE WITH GRANDPA INSTEAD.

HEY.
WHY HAVE YOU BEEN FOLLOWING ME?
RAIN.
I'M SORRY. DID I WAKE YOU?
IT'S FINE.
I HEARD YOU TALKING TO SOMEONE.
I WANTED TO TEST IF SHE WOULD REPLY.
THERE'S A LADY WITH LONG HAIR, JUST SLIGHTLY OLDER THAN MYSELF, STANDING OVER THERE.

IT'S SLIGHTLY SIMILAR TO THE AURA YOU RELEASE WHEN YOU FIGHT.
IT'S SLIGHTLY DIFFERENT FROM A NORMAL SPIRIT, THOUGH...
I CAN'T SEE IT, BUT IS THIS THE PRESENCE OF A GUARDIAN SPIRIT?
YOU SEEM TO BE A MAGNET FOR GIRLS. NOT TO MENTION HANNA, SHE'S...
IT SEEMS TO TAKE INTEREST IN YOU.
THIS IS AN INCREDIBLY STRONG AURA, BUT I DON'T SENSE ANY KILLING INTENTIONS FROM IT.
HEY, HEY.
THIS IS BAD FOR YOUR HEALTH
WHY DON'T YOU GET BACK INSIDE?

ARE YOU BAD AT RECEIVING LOVE FROM OTHERS?
I JUST...
DON'T HAVE THE RIGHT.
ガキ
I've been watching you.
I remember.

IT'S ABOUT TIME FOR YOU TO SET OFF, ISN'T IT?

AND I'M FEELING MUCH BETTER AS WELL! LOOK!
THE VIRGO CLAN OF BANDITS HAS BEEN REALLY QUIET THANKS TO YOU CHASING THEM OFF.

EVEN NOW YOU'RE CONCENTRATING REALLY HARD TO MAINTAIN THIS

I DON'T KNOW THE FUNDAMENTALS BEHIND YOUR DISEASE, BUT YOU'RE ONLY PRETENDING TO BE HEALTHY.

YOU'RE LYING.

OH MY.
A child who has only been fighting for a few months possesses that sharp an intuition?

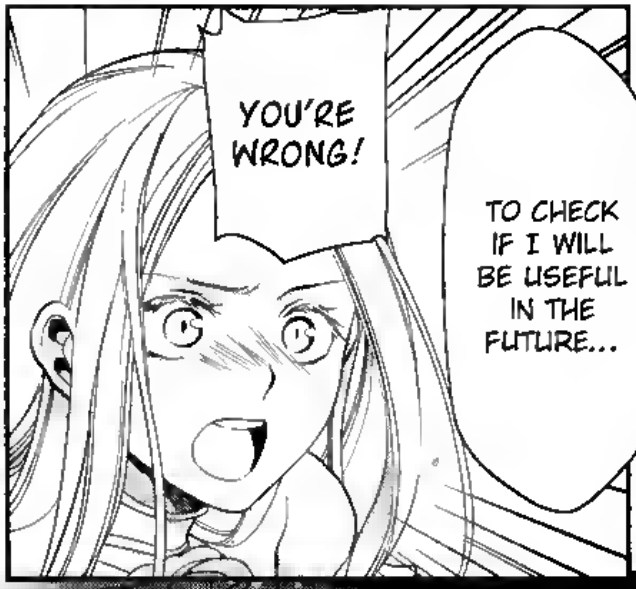
I WANT TO SAY THAT IT WASN'T BECAUSE OF ME HAVING THE NEED TO FEED ANOTHER MOUTH.
HAVING PUT UP THIS FORCED PRETENSE, I WILL FALL INTO FATIGUE LATER ON.
YOU'RE RIGHT. THIS "RECOVERY" IS BUT AN ACT.
I JUST COULDN'T BEAR ANY LONGER
I DON'T HAVE MUCH TIME.
EVEN IF ILLNESS DOESN'T TAKE MY LIFE, AGE WILL.
NOT EVEN MEDICINE OR MAGIC CAN CURE MY BODY ANYMORE.
BUT IF YOU WERE TO BE IN MY POSITION, WOULD YOU ACCEPT ANOTHER PERSON'S EFFORT TO THIS EXTENT?
I APPRECIATE THE CARE THAT YOU'VE PROVIDED ME WITH
RAIN

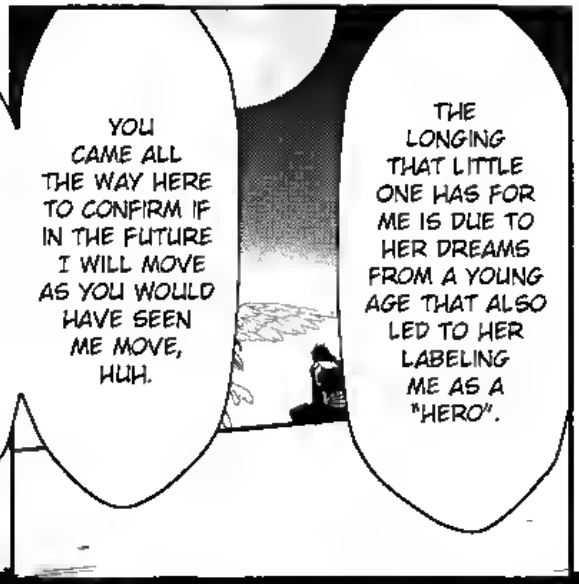
I UNDERSTAND.
DO YOU REALLY THINK THAT I'D WANT TO CONTINUE HINDERING THE PATH OF A YOUNG MAN WHO AIMS TO BE STRONGEST?
BY ACKNOWLEDGING THAT I CAN NO LONGER BE SAVED...

EVERY TIME I WATCHED YOU, THAT CHILD WOULD YEARN TO SEE YOU.
MY MEMORIES ARE SHELFA'S MEMORIES AS WELL.

BUT IF WERE TO COMBINE THIS WITH THE DIARY, EVERYTHING MAKES PERFECT SENSE.

SOUNDS A LITTLE EXAGGERATED..
SHE WOULD ALWAYS END UP CRYING, SO EVERY TIME THAT HAPPENED, I WOULD ERASE THOSE MEMORIES.


YOU'RE WRONG!
TO CHECK IF I WILL BE USEFUL IN THE FUTURE...

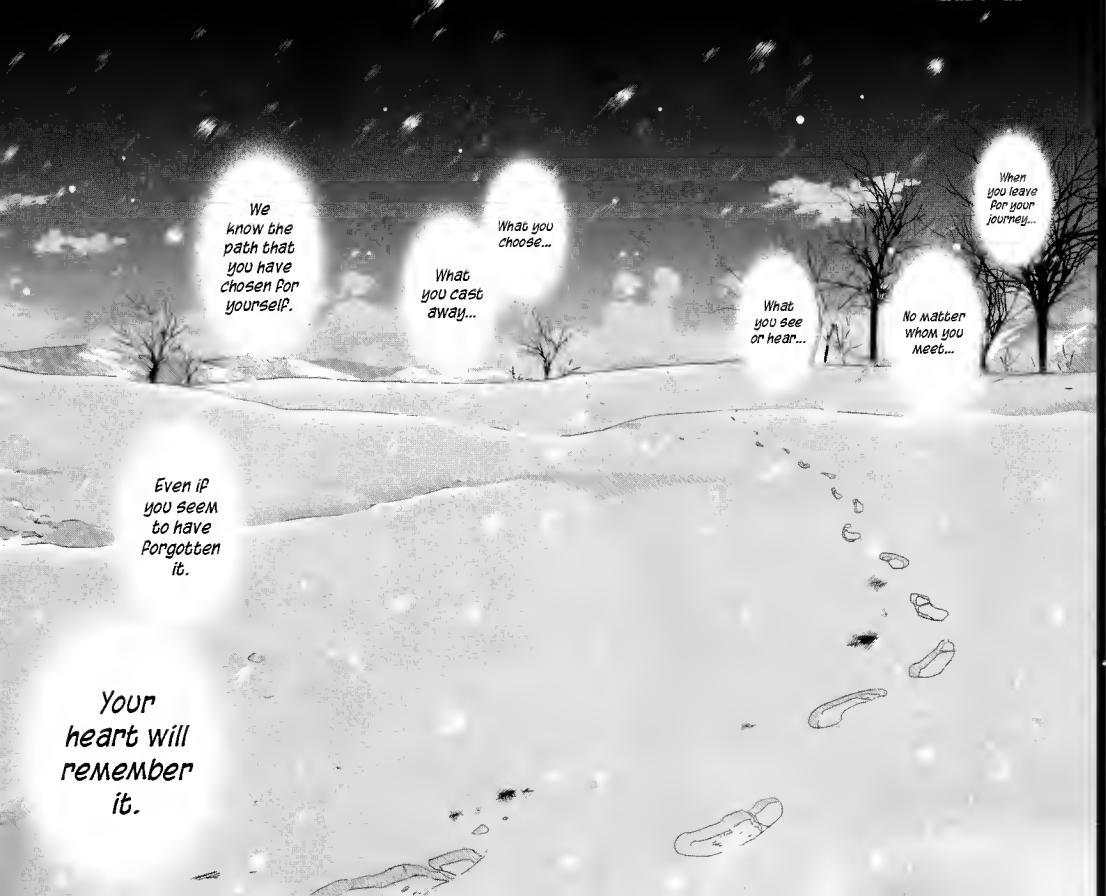

YOU CAME ALL THE WAY HERE TO CONFIRM IF IN THE FUTURE I WILL MOVE AS YOU WOULD HAVE SEEN ME MOVE, HUH.
THE LONGING THAT LITTLE ONE HAS FOR ME IS DUE TO HER DREAMS FROM A YOUNG AGE THAT ALSO LED TO HER LABELING ME AS A "HERO".

No matter how many times I erased her memories, she would always see you in her dreams again.
HAWK!

I NEVER HAD ANY INTEREST IN THAT...

YOU HAVEN'T LEFT?
I WAS THINKING OF BRINGING YOU TO THE DOCTOR AT THE BASE OF THE MOUNTAIN.
I JUST WANTED HIM TO EXAMINE YOU, EVEN IF IT'S IMPOSSIBLE TO CURE.
Haha
AND DO YOU THINK I WILL OBEDIENTLY DESCEND THE MOUNTAIN?
THOSE BANDITS... I SHOULD HAVE KILLED ALL OF THEM AT THAT TIME!
EVEN IF THEY DIDN'T COME, MY ILLNESS OR MY AGE WILL TAKE ME AWAY... I CAN'T ESCAPE FROM DEATH.
IT'S NOT YOUR FAULT ...
HAWK ...
I WILL NEVER FORGIVE THE LIKES OF THOSE BANDITS FOR MAKING YOU SUFFER THROUGH SUCH PATHETIC SWORDSMANSHIP.

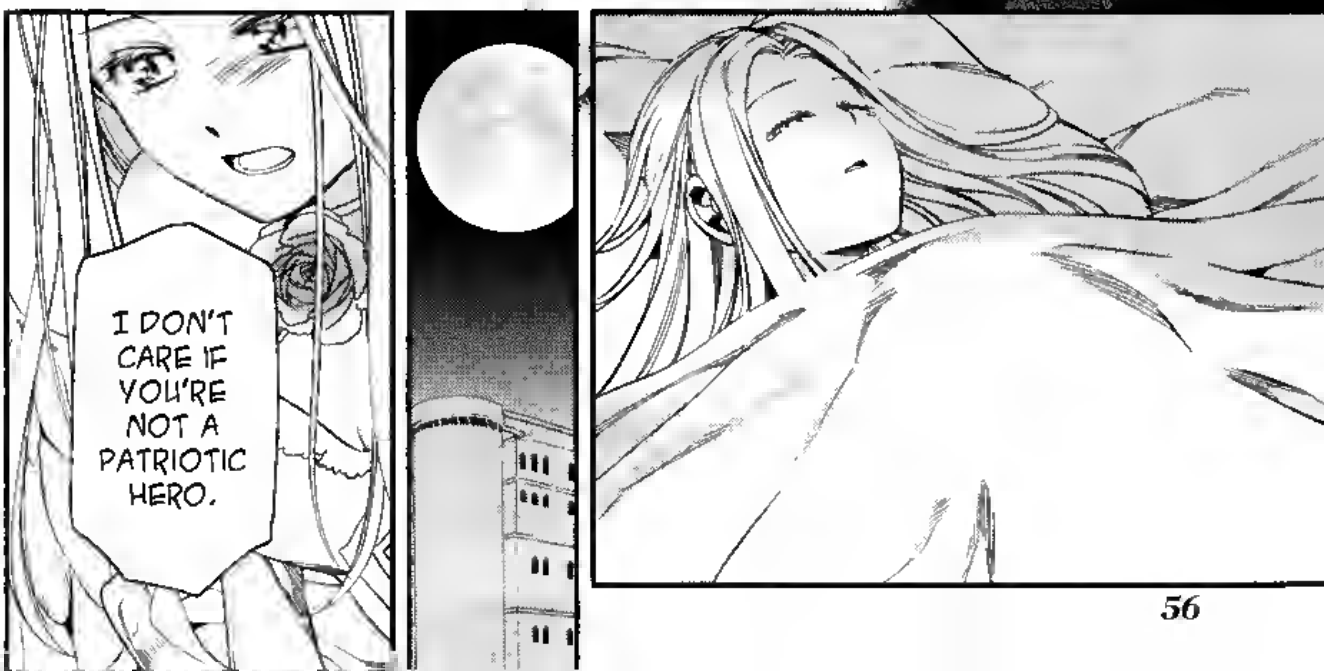
I...
WILL BE YOUR FINAL OPPO-NENT.
YOU REALLY ARE...
A KIND PERSON.
DO YOU HAVE ANY LAST WORDS?
WELL THEN...
I SHALL JUST SAY ONE THING.
I WILL... REMEMBER IT.

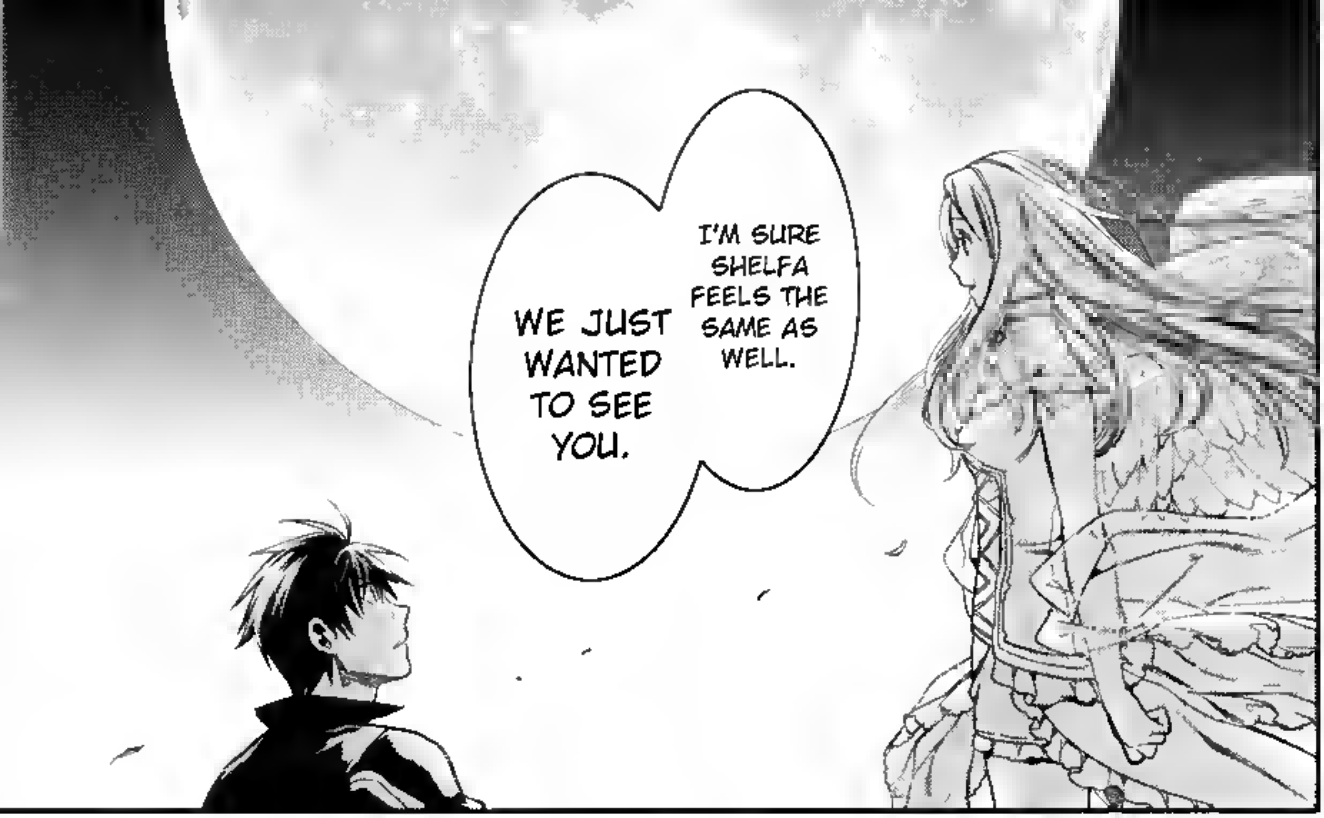

We know the path that you have chosen for yourself.
What you cast away...
What you choose...
What you see or hear...
No matter whom you meet...
When you leave for your journey...
Even if you seem to have forgotten it.
Your heart will remember it.

HOW MANY TIMES MUST THIS REPEAT FOR ME TO FEEL SATIS-FIED!!
THIS WEAK-NESS!
THIS WEAK-NESS!!
I WANT TO GET RID OF IT ONCE AND FOR ALL!!

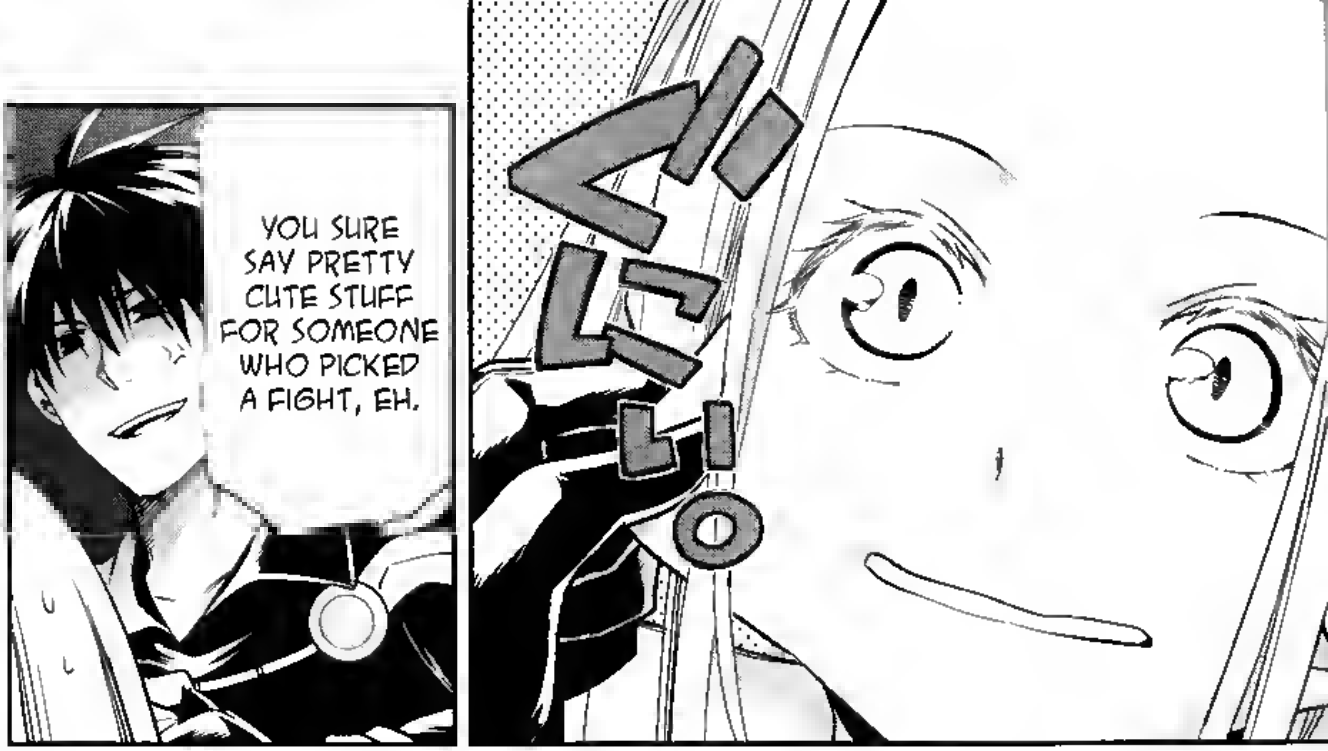
I WILL BECOME STRONGER ...
THAN ANYONE ELSE...
STRONGER THAN ANYONE ELSE IN THIS WORLD...
I WILL POSSESS THE STRENGTH ...
TO PROTECT THE ONES I WANT TO PROTECT !!!

I'VE BEEN WATCHING YOU.


I DON'T CARE IF YOU'RE NOT A PATRIOTIC HERO.


I'M SURE SHELFA FEELS THE SAME AS WELL.
WE JUST WANTED TO SEE YOU.

RAIN.
IT'S BECAUSE YOU'RE YOU THAT WE'RE CAPTIVATED ...

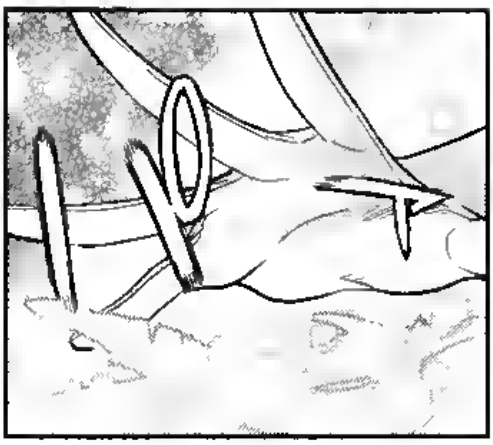

YOU SURE SAY PRETTY CUTE STUFF FOR SOMEONE WHO PICKED A FIGHT, EH.
ムニ!

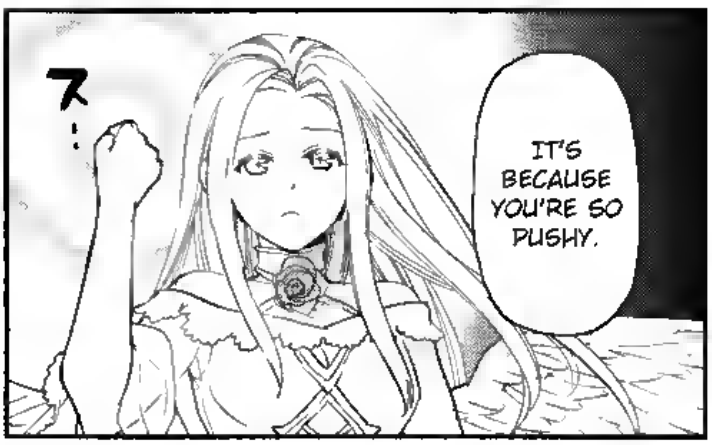
OW.
WHY DON'T YOU PROVE IT TO ME, YOU BRAT.
HUH?
"THERE'S NO WAY A HUMAN BEING WILL BE A MATCH FOR ME", HUH?
HEY, I HEARD IT FROM MILAN.

I SHOULDN'T HAVE DONE THAT.

I DON'T CARE EVEN IF THEY ARE GODS OR DEMONS.
IF YOU'VE BEEN WATCHING ME SINCE YOUNG, I'M SURE YOU UNDERSTAND.

NOW THAT I THINK ABOUT IT, I'VE SAID THIS BEFORE, AND IT WASN'T A LIE.
IN THIS CONTINENT, WHERE POLYTHEISM EXISTS, WITHOUT KNOWING THAT DEMONS LIKE ME EXIST, I'M SURE THERE ARE PEOPLE WHO ARE WORSHIPPED AS GODS BY SOME OTHERS.




ス!
IT'S BECAUSE YOU'RE SO PUSHY.

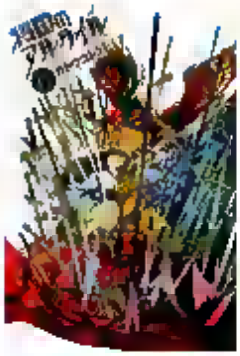
I WISH YOU WOULD DIVERT SUCH PASSION TO OTHER THINGS, BUT...
FINE WITH ME.

I'LL KEEP THIS SELFISH YOU COMPANY.

SENSE SCANS

NEEDS YOUR HELP!

EXPERIENCE NOT NECESSARY!



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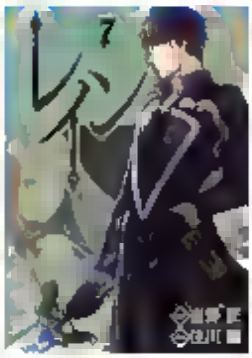

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MICHELLE

HOT DAMN SHE'S CUTE

FEATURING SHELFA'S UNCONSCIOUS BODY

GUEST STARRING HAWK

WITH YOUNG RAIN

DID I MENTION MICHELLE IS HOT?

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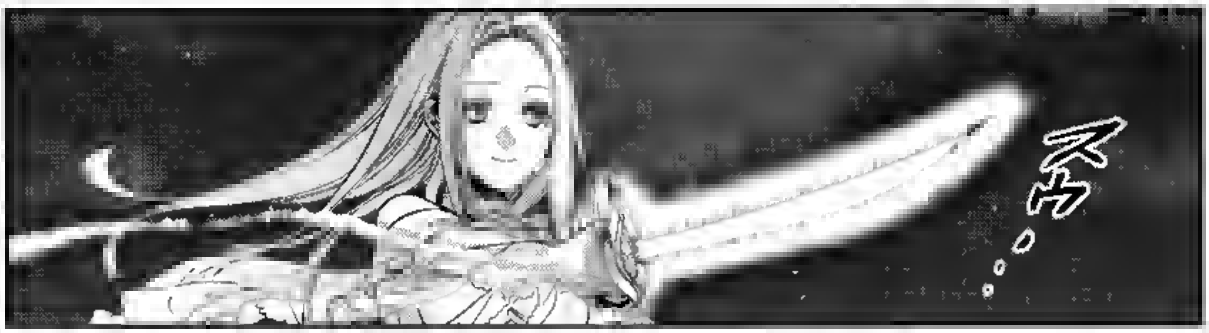
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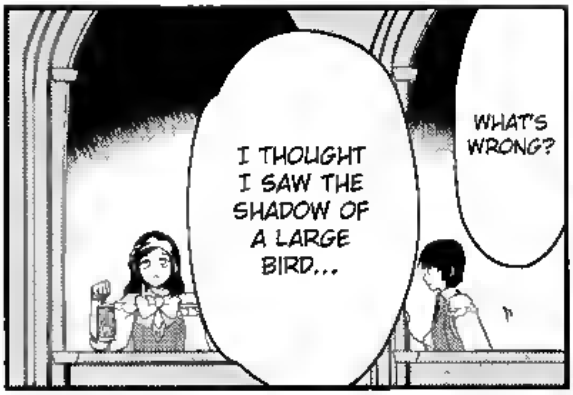
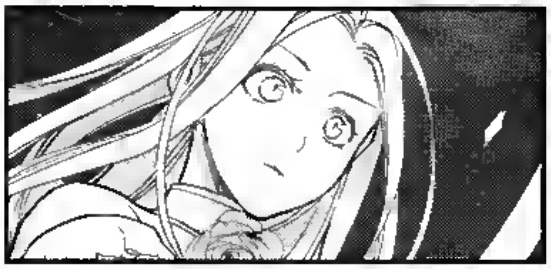
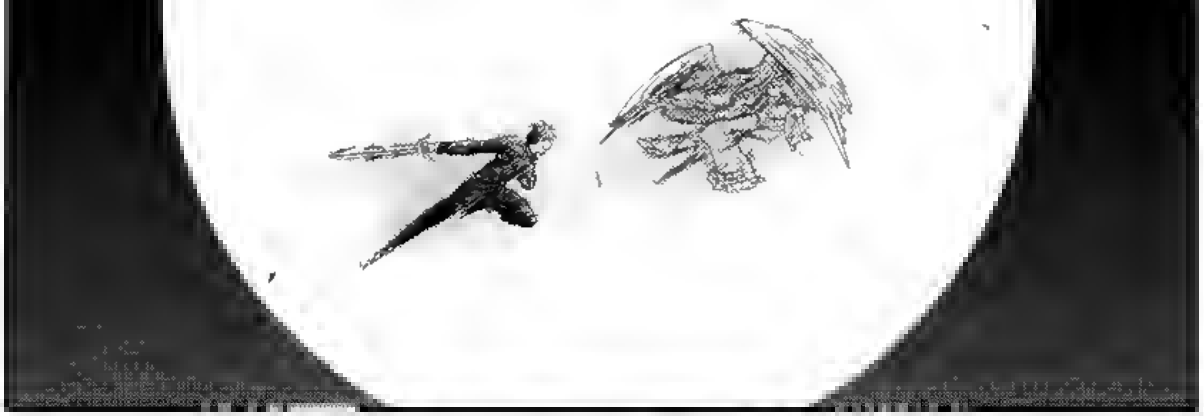
The
Atmosphere
Shifted

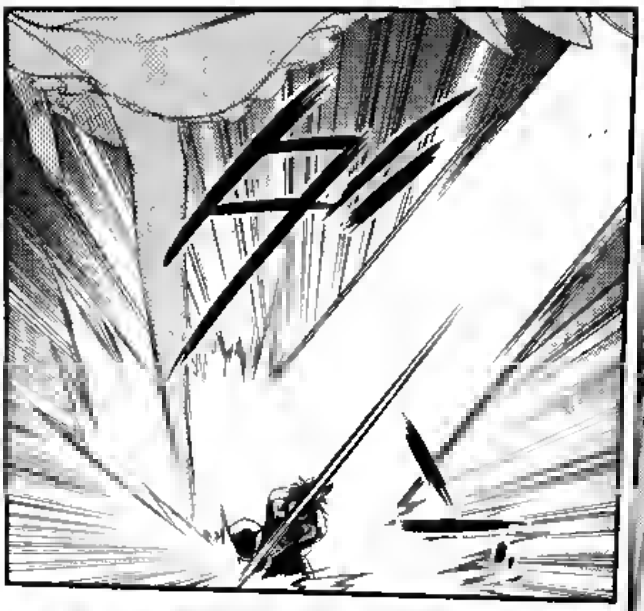

I THOUGHT I SAW THE SHADOW OF A LARGE BIRD...
WHAT'S WRONG?

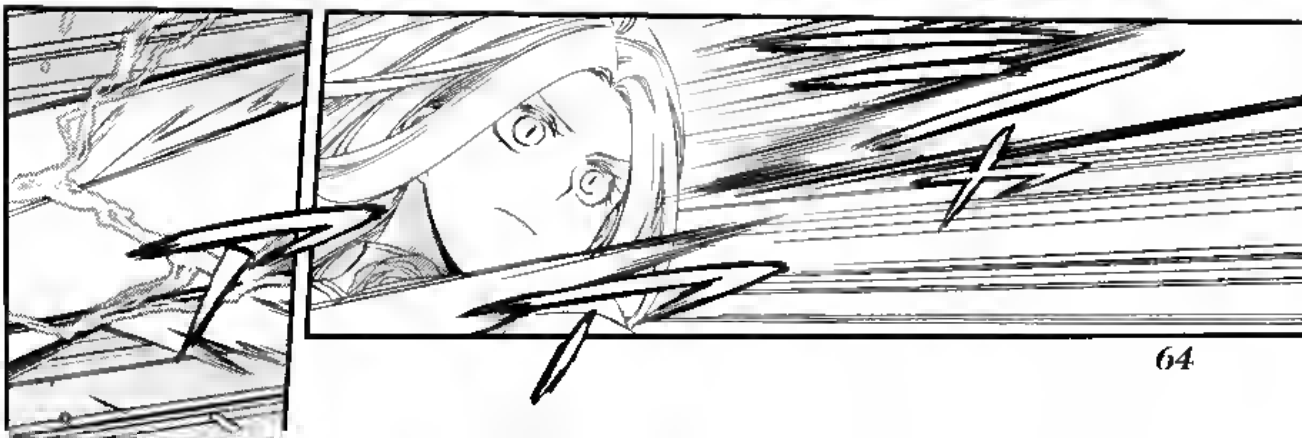
I MUST HAVE BEEN IMAGINING THINGS...

CHAPTER 37
THE STORY OF AN OLD CASTLE'S GHOST
(PART 3)









YOUR ATTACKS ARE SHARP AND ACCURATE.
YOUR PERFECT TIMINGS EXCEL THAT OF HAWK'S ...

HAWK NO LONGER EXISTS.

RAIN.
YOU'VE BECOME STRONG...

THERE'S NO MEANING IN COMPARING ME TO A PERSON WHO CAN NO LONGER FIGHT!

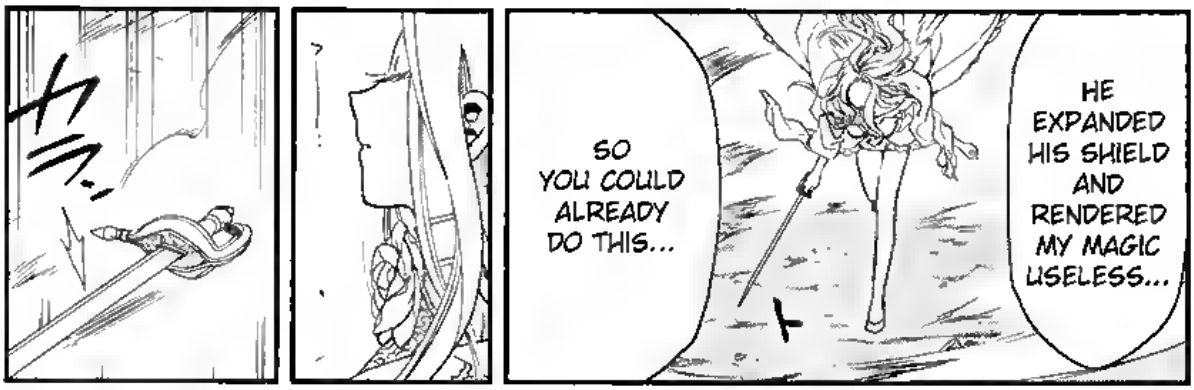
THUNDER
BLAST!

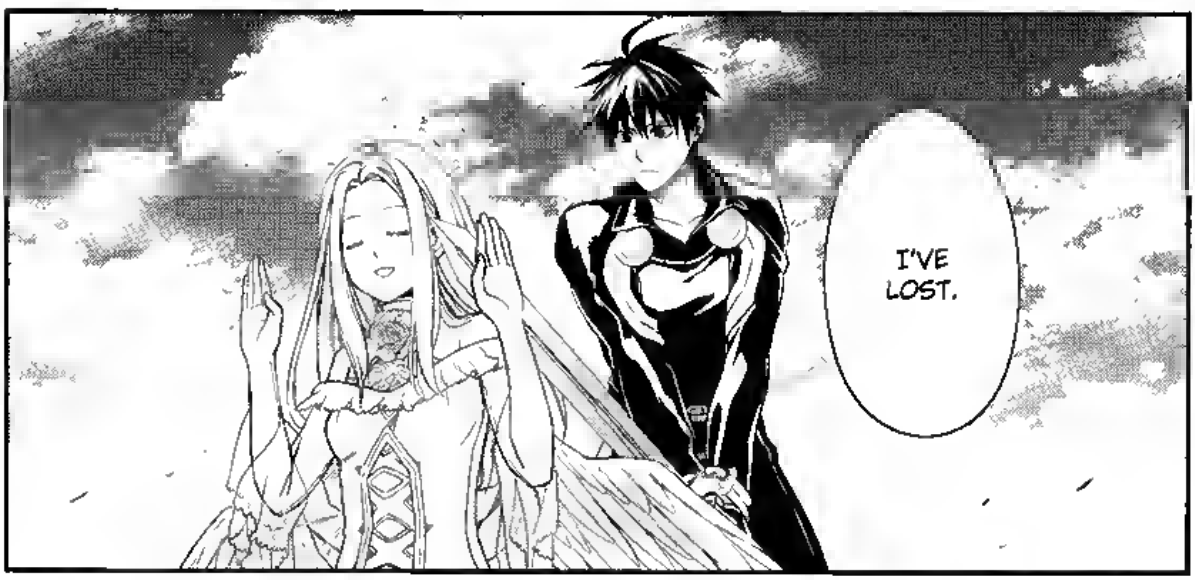
HAVE YOU FORGOT-TEN?
THAT WON'T WORK ON ME ANYMORE!

OF COURSE I REMEM-BER

メキ
メキ
ズシン
ギリ
BUT IF I DO THIS...
IF I ATTACK YOU DIRECTLY WITH MAGIC, YOUR ANTI-DRAGON SHIELD WOULD JUST OBSTRUCT IT.
ギリ
KURGH...
ズズズ
I WON'T ALLOW YOU TO OVERDO THINGS, RAIN.
GRAVITY DESTRUCTION!

I'M REALLY GRATEFUL FOR YOUR CONCERN!!


HE EXPANDED HIS SHIELD AND RENDERED MY MAGIC USELESS...
SO YOU COULD ALREADY DO THIS...


I'VE LOST.

HMM?
WHAT ARE YOU PLANNING?

YOU LIAR!
I WASN'T HOLDING BACK.
WHY ARE YOU HOLDING BACK!!
PUT IN MORE EFFORT, YOU HEAR ME?
EVEN THOUGH YOU INTENTIONALLY BROUGHT ME TO THIS ISOLATED PLACE...YOUR ATTACKS WERE TOO SHALLOW!
I NEVER CONSIDERED THE INTENT TO KILL YOU AS SOMETHING LIGHT.
I CAN'T HELP IT.
THAT I SHIFTED YOU TO THIS ABNORMAL SPACE.
BUT I FIGURED YOU'D NOTICE.

YOU DIDN'T SHOW THE SLIGHTEST BIT OF SURPRISE DESPITE NOTICING IT
IT'S STRANGE ENOUGH THAT NO ONE SHOWED UP AFTER SUCH A SHOWY MATCH.
IT WAS A PRETTY OBVIOUS CHANGE.
DID YOU KNOW FROM THE VERY BEGINNING?
THAT A DEMON POSSESSES SUCH POWERS.
I'VE SEEN SOMEONE ELSE PERFORM ATMO-SPHERE SHIFTING MAGIC.
THERE ARE PROBABLY THINGS YOU DON'T KNOW ABOUT ME.
IT'S NOT AS IF YOU CLUNG ON TO ME ALL DAY LONG.
I GUESS.

YOU WANTED TO TEACH ME A WAY TO FIGHT AGAINST A DEMON, RIGHT?
I'M GRATEFUL FOR THAT.
I WENT AS FAR AS TO EVEN STARTLE MILAN TO STIR THINGS UP, BUT IN THE END, IT WAS A WASTED EFFORT.
BEFORE YOU DISAPPEAR
I KNEW IT.
YOUR SPIRITUAL PRESSURE HAS FADED.
WELL, YOU SUCCEEDED IN MERGING WITH BOTH THE PERSON AND THE SOUL. CONSIDERING A SUPERIOR DEMON LIKE YOU WHO WAS EVEN THOUGHT TO BE SACRED, YOU REALLY WEREN'T PUTTING IN ANY EFFORT AT FIGHTING.
GOING EASY ON ME HAS ITS DOWNSIDES AS WELL. I HAD THE OPPORTUNITY TO DEDUCE ALL THOSE FACTS WITHOUT YOU NOTICING.

YOU PERSONALLY LEAKED INFORMATION WITHOUT THREATENING THE OTHERS...
BECAUSE YOU WERE POSITIVE THAT IT WILL REMAIN HIDDEN.
WHILE I'M AT IT, SHALL I TELL YOU ONE MORE THING?
IF IT WAS ADVICE THROUGH ACTUAL COMBAT, EVEN IF YOU ERASE OUR MEMORIES, OUR BODIES WILL REMEMBER IT.
LIKE WHAT HAPPENED THE LAST TIME
THE MEMORIES OF ALL THOSE PEOPLE AFFECTED BY THIS "GHOST" INCIDENT WILL BE ERASED, RIGHT?
SO YOU SAW THROUGH ME.

BUT I SHALL MAKE THIS THE ONLY ADVICE THAT WILL REMAIN WITHIN YOUR MEMORIES.
YOU MUST BE VERY CAREFUL WITH REYGUL.
EVEN IN THE MERITOCRATIC WORLD OF DEMONS, ALMOST NO ONE COULD STAND UP AGAINST HIM.
HE'S EXCEPTION-ALLY STRONG EVEN WITHIN THE DEMONIC REALM.
I'LL DEFINITELY SETTLE SCORES WITH HIM
HONESTLY, I'D LIKE YOU TO TAKE SHELFA AND RUN AWAY WITHOUT HAVING TO FIGHT HIM.

IF ANYTHING HAPPENS TO YOU, SHE'LL CRY FOR DAYS WITHOUT END UNTIL SHE DRIES UP.
STOP EXAGGER ATING
AS IF SHELFA WILL RUN AWAY WITHOUT YOU!
IF THE LITTLE ONE PLANS TO RUN, THEN I WON'T STOP HER.
INCLUDING US.
BUT IF YOU THINK THAT WAY, YOU'RE BEING RUDE TO EVERYONE WHO CARES ABOUT YOU.
IT LOOKS LIKE YOU FEEL THAT IT MUSTN'T HAPPEN.
YOU SAID, "THERE'S NO WAY ANYONE WOULD LOVE ME."

IT'S NOT "FEELS LIKE".
I'M REALLY ...
IT FEELS LIKE I'M BEING COURTED.
カァ!!
LOOKS LIKE...
IT'S TIME...

AND WHAT WILL BECOME OF HER?
FROM THIS POINT FORTH, MY CONSCIOUSNESS WILL BECOME ONE WITH SHELFA'S.
I DON'T KNOW...
ONCE I DISAPPEAR, SHE SHOULD WAKE AROUND TOMORROW.
ASIDE FROM HER MIXED BLOOD, I THINK IT WAS MORE OF HER CAPABILITY IN DIRECTLY SUSTAINING MY DEMONIC TECHNIQUES.
THE REASON AS TO WHY I WAS ABLE TO MANIFEST MYSELF PHYSICALLY AFTER SHE FELL UNCONSCIOUS EVEN IF IT WAS JUST MOMENTARY...
ON THE OTHER HAND, I MIGHT COMPLETELY LOSE MY DEMONIC POWERS.
I THINK THAT HER POWERS WILL CONTINUE TO GROW UPON OUR COMPLETE FUSION.
EVEN BEFORE ALL THAT, SHELFA'S POWERS WERE ALREADY BECOMING STRONGER.

I MEAN, I DON'T CARE WHAT YOU WILL BECOME.
EH?!
サラサラ
サラサラ
EITHER WAY, I DON'T CARE.
I SEE.
NO MATTER WHAT HAPPENS, SOMEHOW I'LL HANDLE IT.
IT'S A PROMISE.
EVEN THOUGH YOU'LL FORGET EVERYTHING?

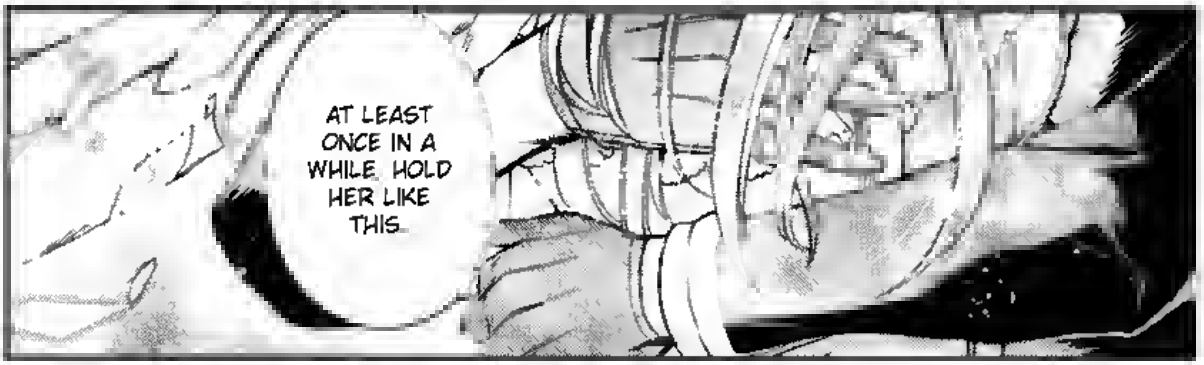
I'M DIFF-ERENT FROM WHAT I USED TO BE.
EVEN NOW, I STILL HAVEN'T FORGOT-TEN THE PAST.
I WON'T.

THANK YOU.

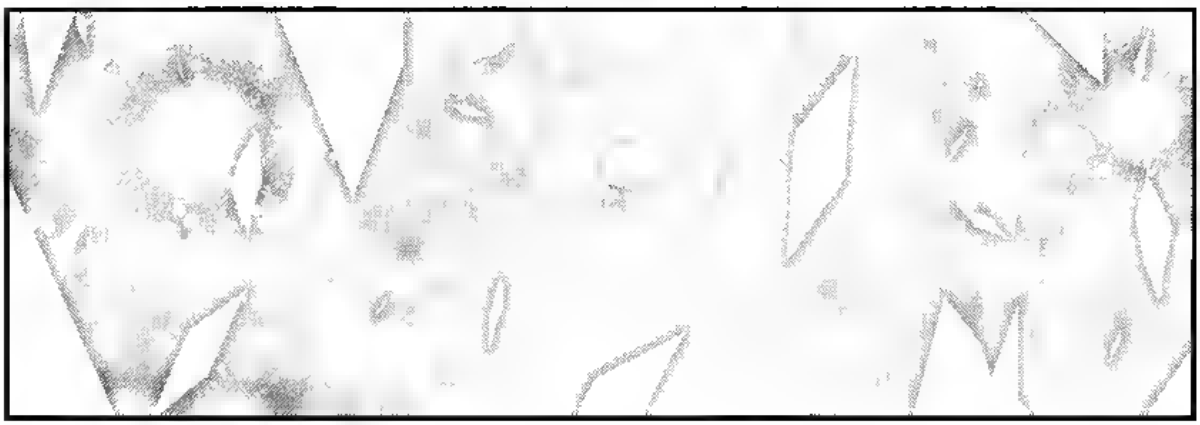
BUT SOON, I WILL DISAPPEAR.

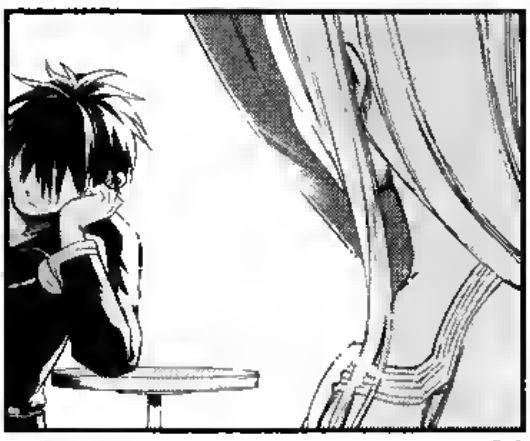
MEMORIES OF "DEMON" SHELFA WILL DISAPPEAR FROM EVERY SINGLE PERSON.

I'LL LEAVE SHELFA TO YOU.

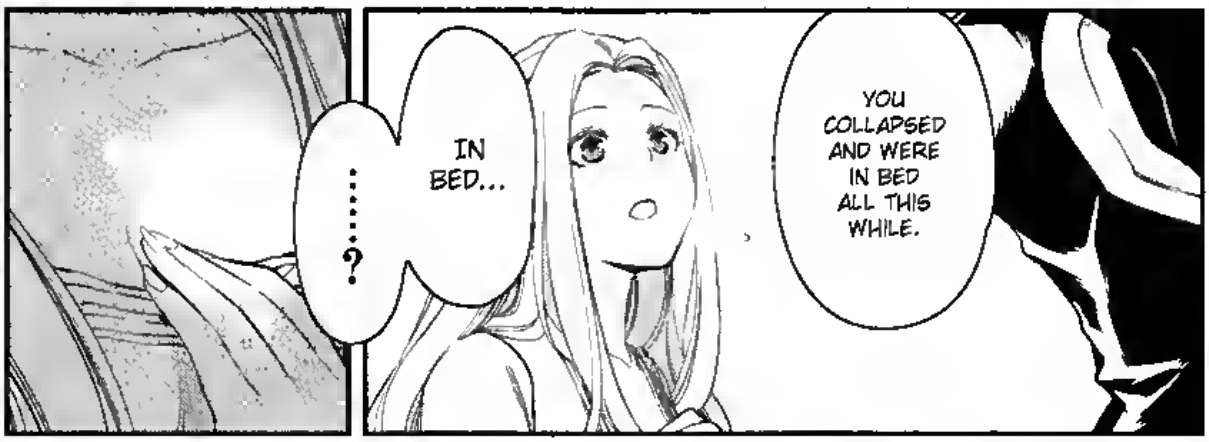

AT LEAST ONCE IN A WHILE, HOLD HER LIKE THIS.

AS YOU CALL OUT TO HER.





WE CAME BACK HERE...
AND THEN...
I REMEMBER THE ALLIANCE...
HOW ARE YOU FEELING?
YOU'RE AWAKE.

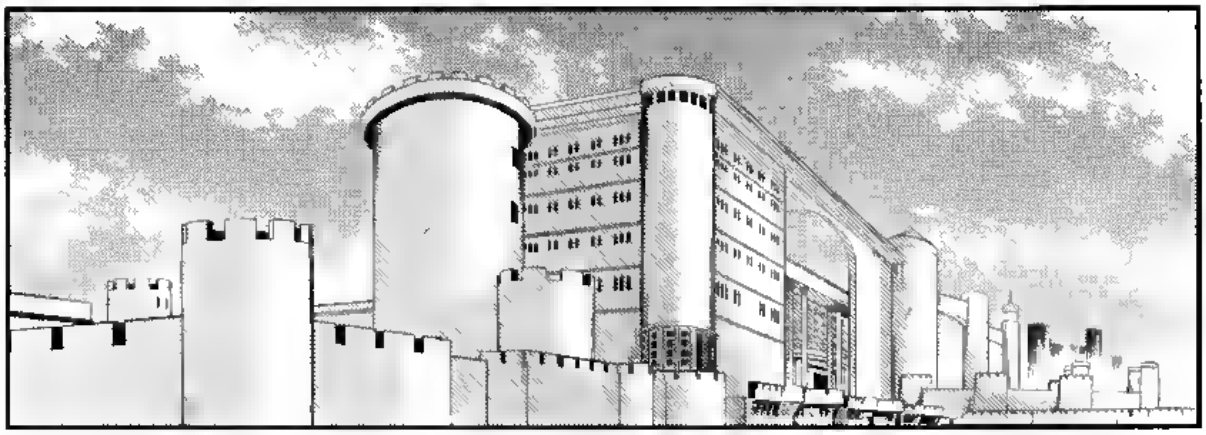

.....?
IN BED...
YOU COLLAPSED AND WERE IN BED ALL THIS WHILE.

ALTHOUGH I DON'T REMEMBER WHAT IT WAS ABOUT...
I WAS DREAMING ALL THIS TIME.

I REME-
MBER.
I'M DIFFERENT FROM WHAT I USED TO BE.
EVEN IF EVERYONE ELSE HAS FORGOTTEN ...
I WILL ALWAYS REMEMBER.

RAIN, WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
I DON'T UNDER-STAND.
EVEN THOUGH I DON'T UNDER-STAND...
WHY...

IT'S JUST A TALE.



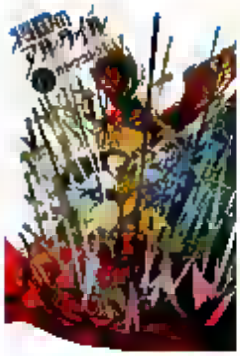
As the story of the old castle's ghost quietly came to an end.

As the day begins, the rumor of the female ghost started to fade...

SENSE SCANS

NEEDS YOUR HELP!

EXPERIENCE NOT NECESSARY!



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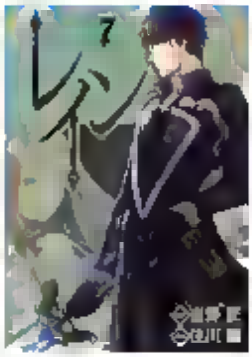

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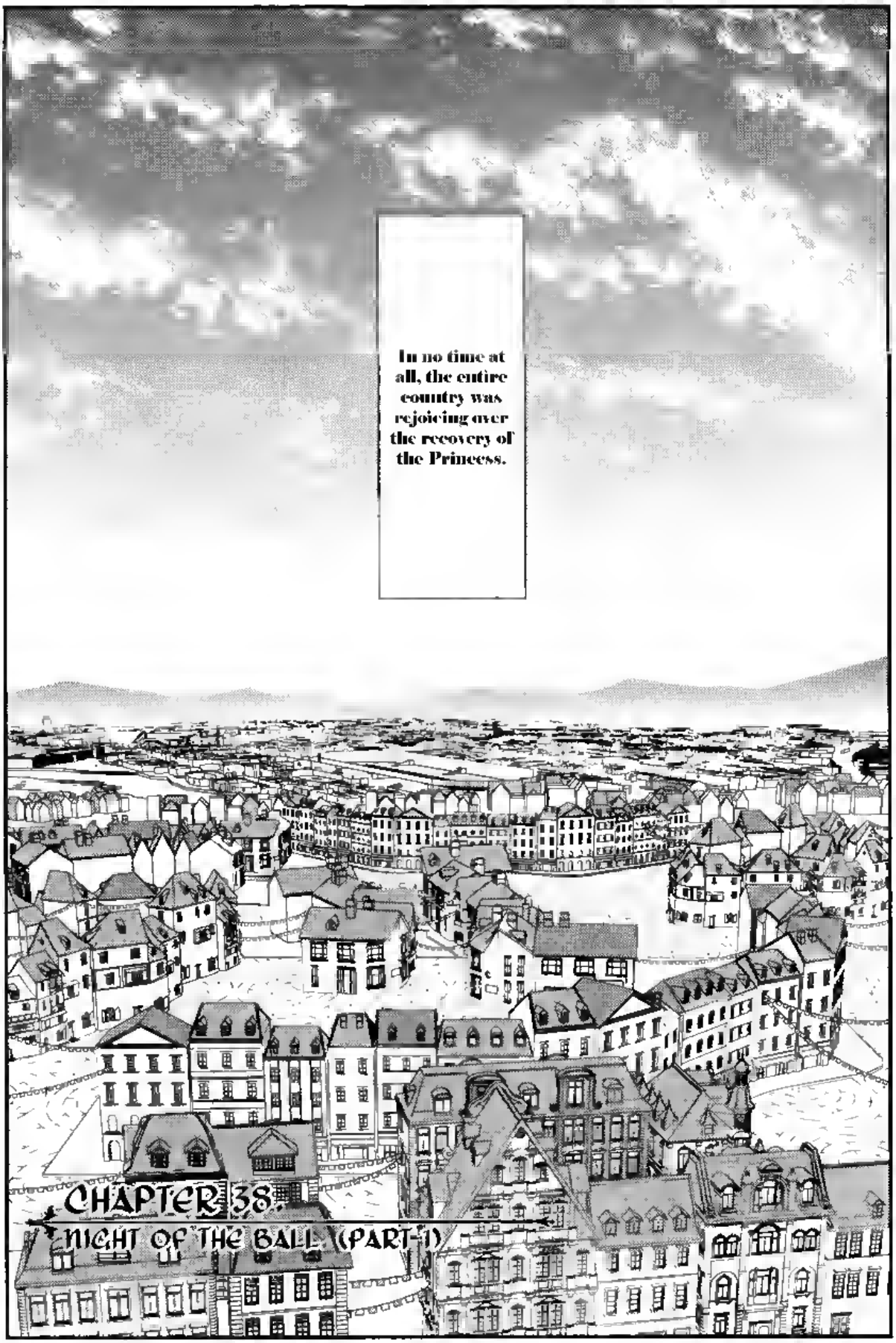
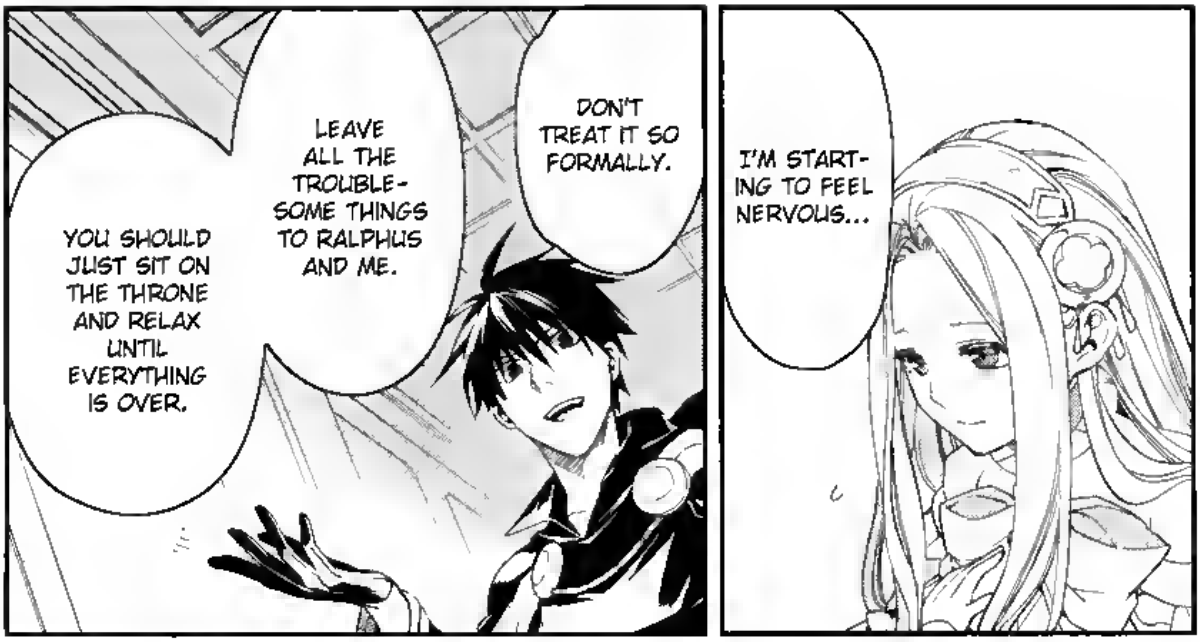
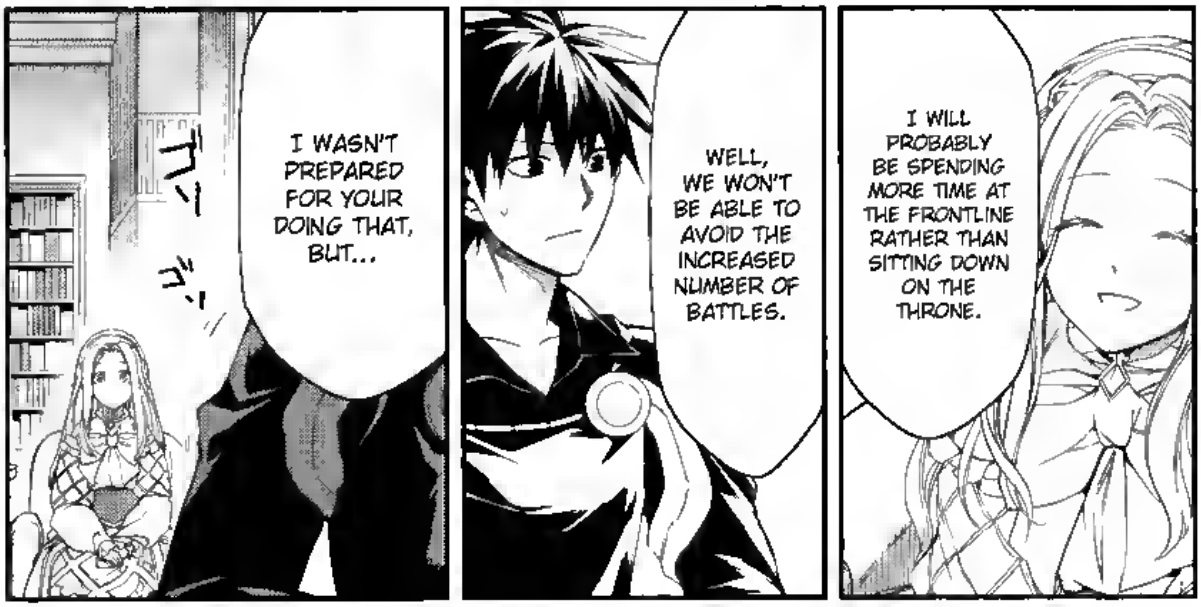
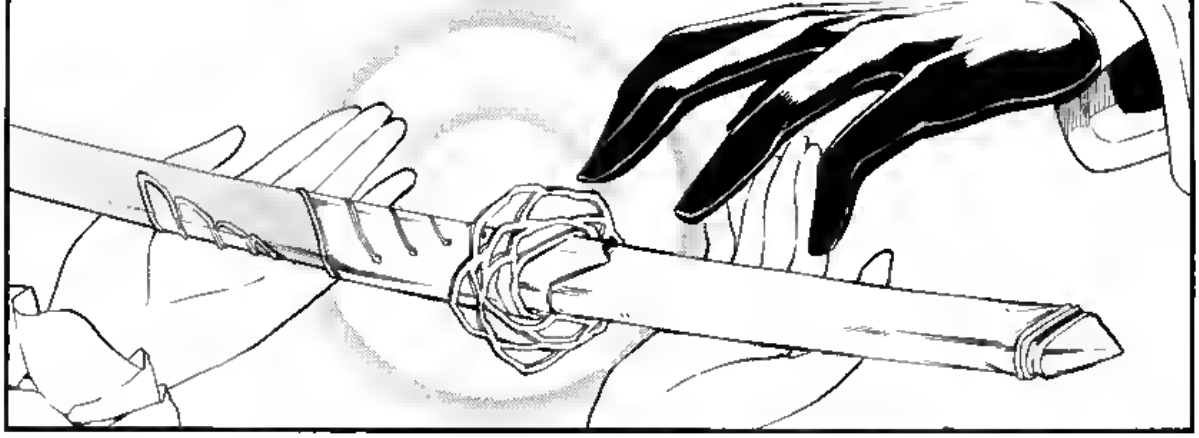

In no time at all, the entire country was rejoicing over the recovery of the Princess.
CHAPTER 38:
NIGHT OF THE BALL (PART-1)

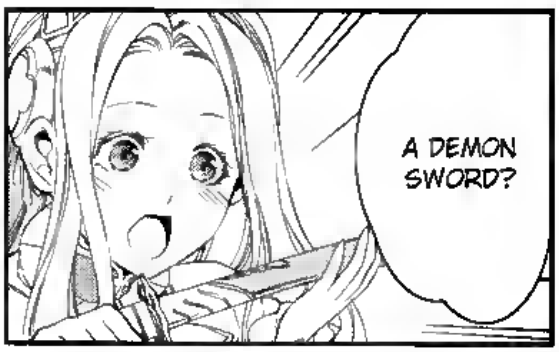
The day has finally been decided for the long-awaited coronation ceremony.
The whole of Smkwoll looked forward to the beginning of a new age.
THIS TIME, I WON'T LET ANYONE INTERFERE.
YEAH.
TOMORROW IS THE DAY.


DON'T TREAT IT SO FORMALLY.
LEAVE ALL THE TROUBLE-SOME THINGS TO RALPHUS AND ME.
YOU SHOULD JUST SIT ON THE THRONE AND RELAX UNTIL EVERYTHING IS OVER.
I'M START-ING TO FEEL NERVOUS...

NO...
IF THERE IS ANYTHING I CAN DO, I WILL JOIN IN AS WELL.
EVEN IF I CAN'T FIGHT... JUST LIKE THE OTHER TIME.

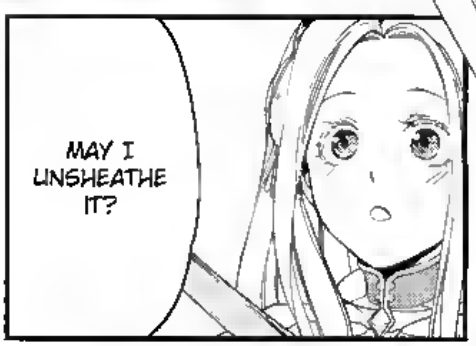

I WASN'T PREPARED FOR YOUR DOING THAT, BUT...
WELL, WE WON'T BE ABLE TO AVOID THE INCREASED NUMBER OF BATTLES.
I WILL PROBABLY BE SPENDING MORE TIME AT THE FRONTLINE RATHER THAN SITTING DOWN ON THE THRONE.



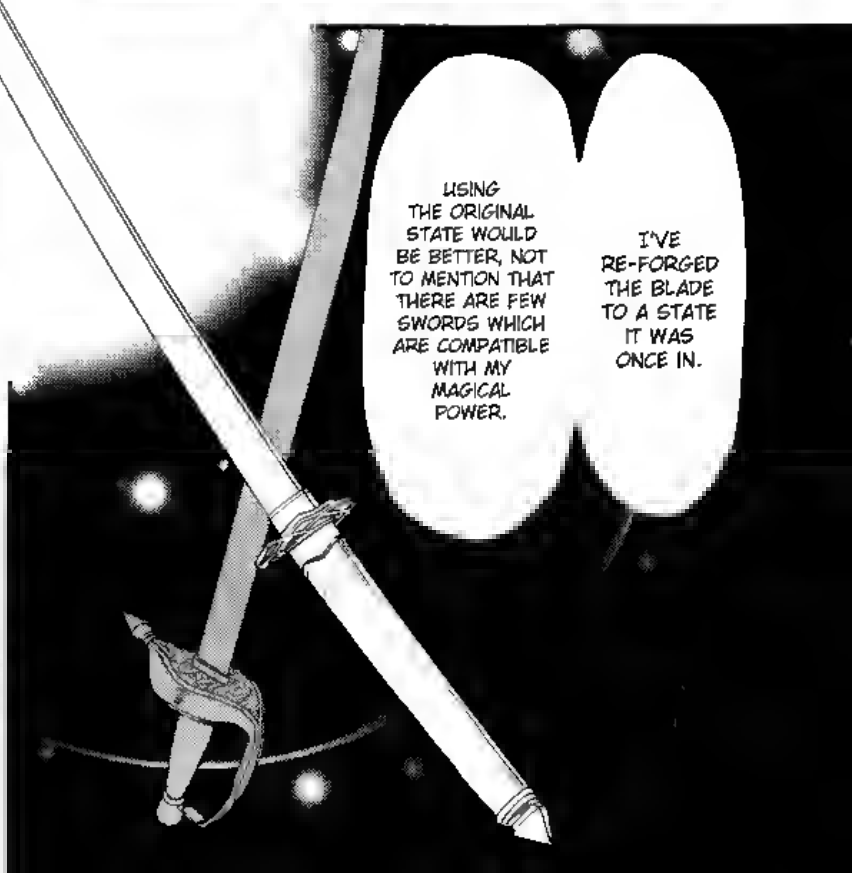

A DEMON SWORD?

A GIFT FOR YOUR CORO-NATION.
THIS BLADE IS IMBUED WITH MY MAGICAL POWERS.

OF COURSE I'M THE ONE WHO'S GIVING IT TO YOU AFTER ALL

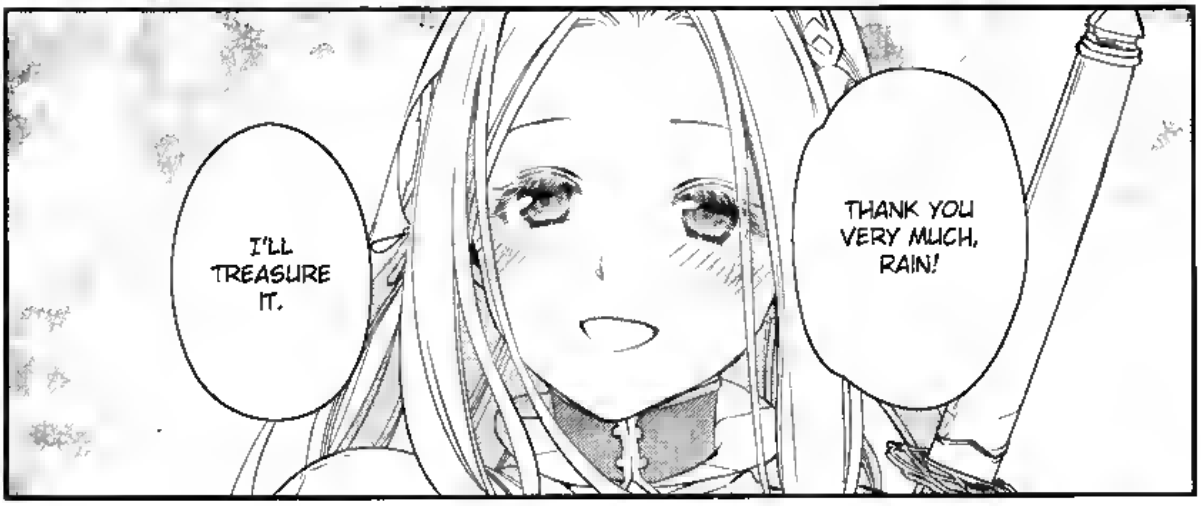

MAY I UNSHEATHE IT?

Go ahead.


I'VE RE-FORGED THE BLADE TO A STATE IT WAS ONCE IN.
USING THE ORIGINAL STATE WOULD BE BETTER, NOT TO MENTION THAT THERE ARE FEW SWORDS WHICH ARE COMPATIBLE WITH MY MAGICAL POWER.

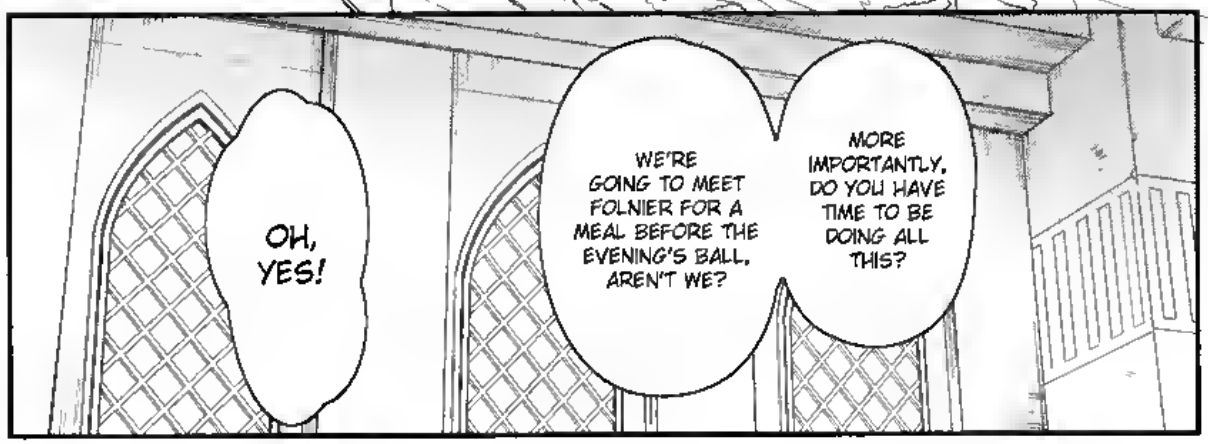
A blade of pure white with a pale blue-shine.
WELL, IT IS MY MAGICAL POWER AFTER ALL.
JUST LIKE RAIN.
SO STRONG, YET SO GENTLE.
IT'S BRIMMING WITH DIGNITY.

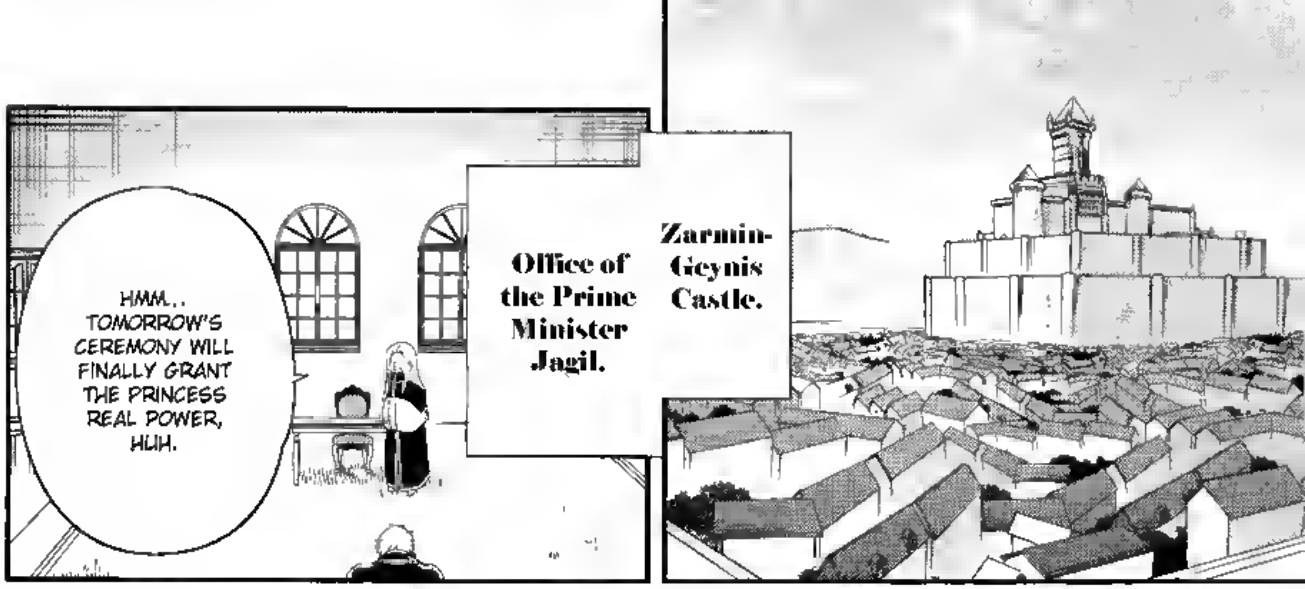
I CAN'T HELP IT BECAUSE I'M SO HAPPY!
IT'S A TREASURE THAT RAIN GAVE ME!
AREN'T YOU GETTING A LITTLE TOO ENTRANCED BY THAT SWORD?
That's dangerous.
SOMEHOW, I FEEL A LITTLE NOSTALGIC.
ALSO...
AS IF THIS SWORD HAS BEEN BY MY SIDE FOR A LONG TIME...


I'LL TREASURE IT.
THANK YOU VERY MUCH, RAIN!

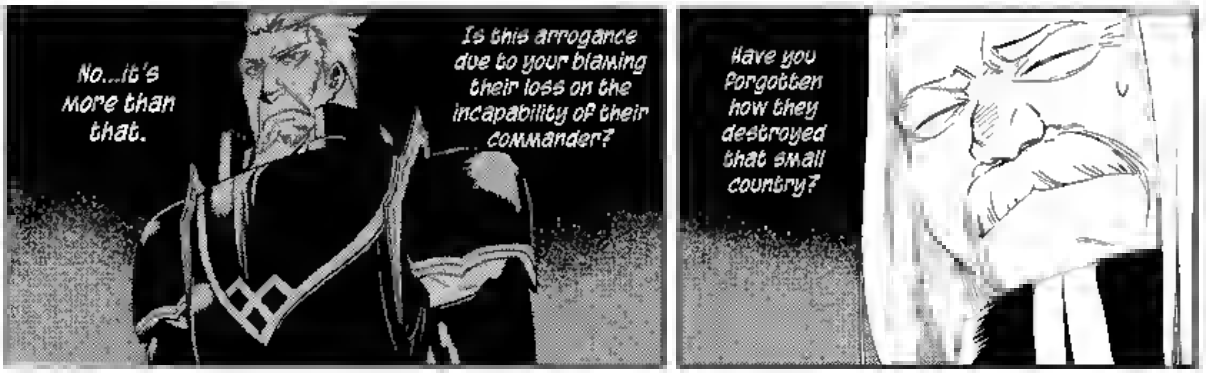
YES...
PLEASE DO.

IT WILL DEFINITELY GRANT YOU STRENGTH.


OH, YES!
WE'RE GOING TO MEET FOLNIER FOR A MEAL BEFORE THE EVENING'S BALL, AREN'T WE?
MORE IMPORTANTLY, DO YOU HAVE TIME TO BE DOING ALL THIS?

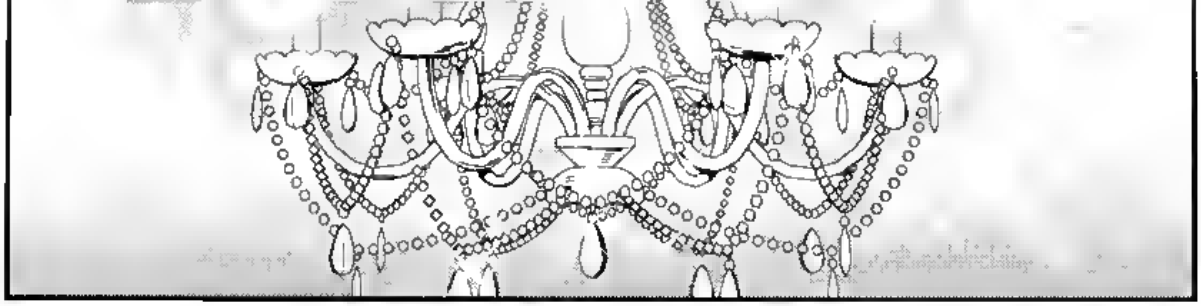

Office of the Prime Minister Jagil.
Zarmin-Geynis Castle.
HMM.. TOMORROW'S CEREMONY WILL FINALLY GRANT THE PRINCESS REAL POWER, HUH.

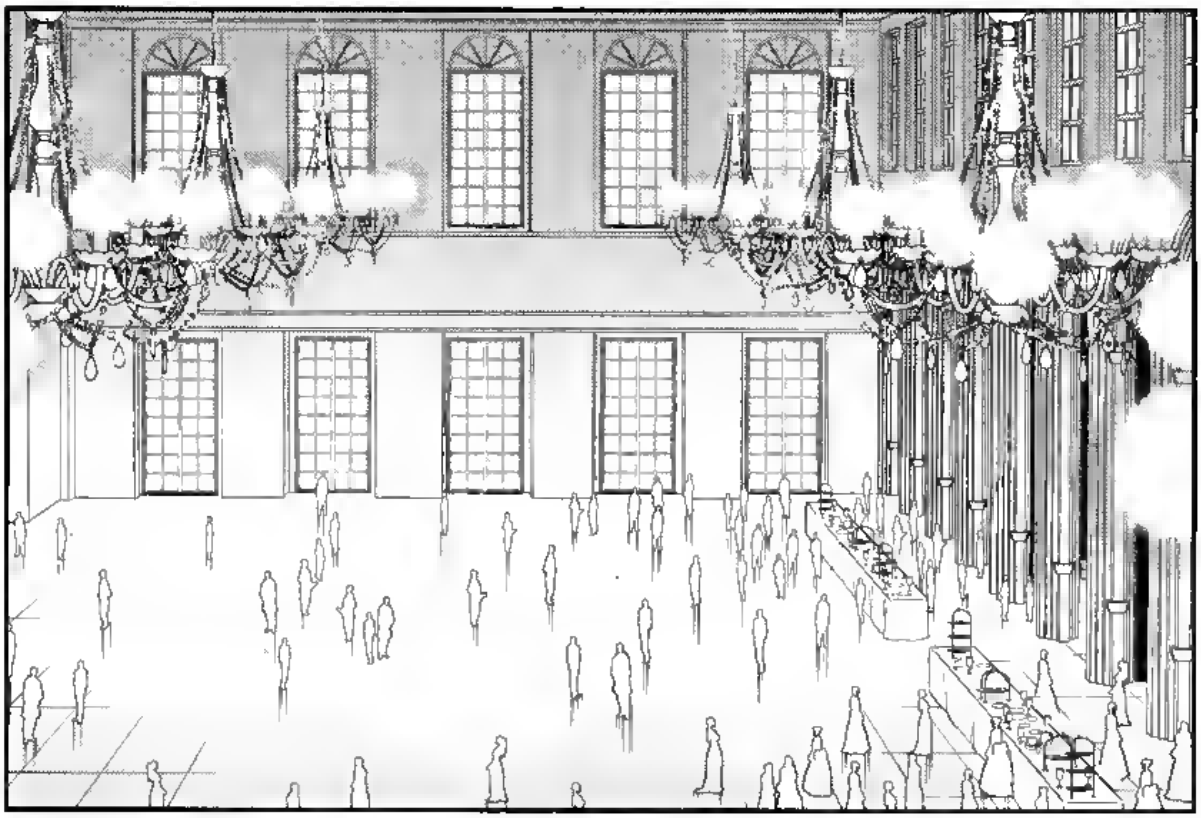
I THINK THAT WE SHOULD KEEP AN EYE ON THAT COUNTRY'S MOVEMENT FOR NOW.
PRIME MINISTER, IF WE GATHER ALL THE SMALL COUNTRIES TOGETHER, WE CAN FORM A DESTRUCTIVE ARMY.

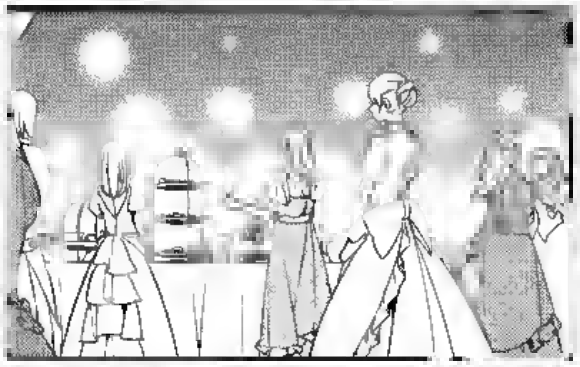

No...it's more than that.
Is this arrogance due to your blaming their loss on the incapability of their commander?
Have you forgotten how they destroyed that small country?

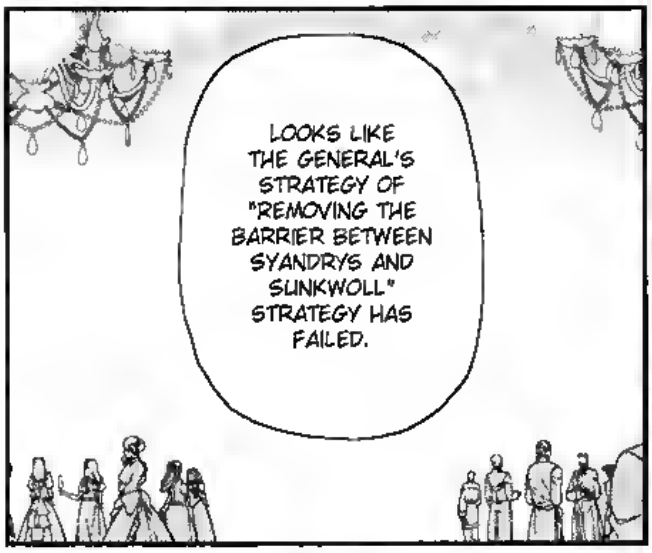
There are many who support him based on that very argument. That's why things become so hard to manage.
Oo
WE ARE NOT PEOPLE THAT CAN BE ON EQUAL LEVEL WITH HIS MAJESTY!

ACCORDING TO THE GUARDS, HIS MAJESTY HAS JUST LEFT...
IT SEEMS HE WAS GOING TO MEET A CLOSE FRIEND OF HIS...
I WILL REPORT THIS MATTER TO HIS MAJESTY
YOU ARE DISMISSED.
A close friend... of that King...?
ALSO...
HE MENTIONED THAT HE WOULD PAY A VISIT TO AN OLD ENEMY OF HIS ON THE WAY.








LOOKS LIKE THE GENERAL'S STRATEGY OF "REMOVING THE BARRIER BETWEEN SYANDRYS AND SUNKWOLL" STRATEGY HAS FAILED.

THEY'RE SEPARATED.
INDEED

JUST A FEW DAYS AGO, WE WERE STILL ENEMIES.
IT'S UNDERSTANDABLE.

ぎくっ
SO...WHAT ARE YOU GUYS DOING HERE AGAIN?

OH!
LOOKS LIKE WE WERE WRONG.
I'M SORRY!!
RETURN TO YOUR POSTS!
WE'RE IN THE MIDST OF DUTIES.
HYA, AAH
ズル ズル

LOOKS LIKE IT'S GOING WELL.
ARE YOU PLANNING TO LEAVE US SO SOON, LORD RAIN?
WELL, I SHOULD BE FREE TO RETURN TO MY ROOM NOW.

EVERYONE'S FINALLY STARTING TO OPEN UP AFTER ALL.

NOT AT ALL. IT IS JUST UNFORTUNATE THAT A SHOWY EVENT LIKE THIS IS PROVING TO BE RATHER INAPPROPRIATE FOR A MILITARY SOLDIER LIKE MYSELF.
NOW, IF YOU WOULD EXCUSE ME.
I DO HOPE THAT YOU WILL HAVE A PLEASANT STAY HERE, YOUR HIGHNESS.
AHAHA HAHA!!!

EVEN THOUGH YOU WERE JUST PRETENDING TO BE A DECENT KNIGHT, IT WAS UNEXPECTEDLY CONVINCING.
WELL, I WON'T MIND YOU IN YOUR USUAL FORM.
SO THIS PRETENSE TO BE A "GOOD YOUNG MAN" WAS WHAT SCARED MY MESSENGERS AWAY.
I'D BE AN IDIOT TO RESUME SUCH A BEHAVIOR AFTER BEING LAUGHED AT.
I'M GOING OFF.
OH.
THIS BANQUET NOT ONLY REPRESENTS THE CELEBRATION OF OUR ALLIANCE, BUT THE EVE OF THE CORONATION CEREMONY AS WELL, AM I RIGHT?
YET YOU ARE HEADING BACK ALREADY WITHOUT EVEN PLAYING THE LEAD ROLE FOR TONIGHT.
I'M SURE EVEN THAT PERSON HERSELF IS LOOKING FORWARD TO THIS AS WELL?
IF YOU WERE TO BE ABSENT, I'M PRETTY SURE SHE'D GET UPSET, WOULDN'T SHE?
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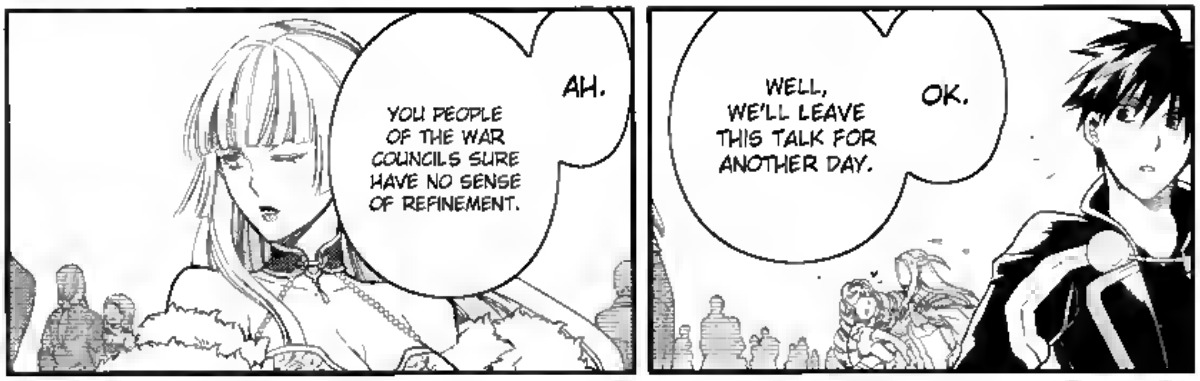
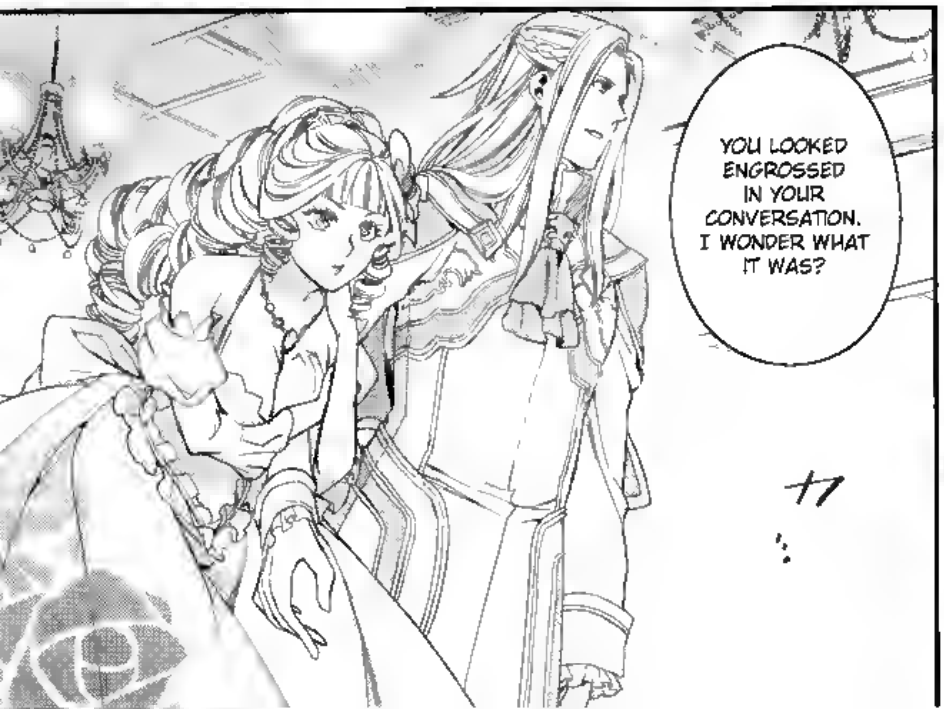
AT LEAST DURING THIS SORT OF OCCASION, I DO HOPE THAT YOU WOULD RELAX AND ENJOY.
THIS IS A RARE OPPORTUNITY.
I THOUGHT SHE WAS A QUIET PERSON, BUT APPARENTLY SHE IS RATHER TALKATIVE.
SHE TOLD ME A LOT ABOUT YOU WHEN I MET HER IN THE AFTERNOON.
IT'S LIKE A SECOND HOLY WAR.
WE EVEN HAVE A DEMON AMONGST OUR ENEMIES.
YEAH.
AND THE WARS TO COME WILL BE MORE INTENSE.
OUR ALLIANCE WOULD PROBABLY INSTIGATE THE OTHER COUNTRIES TO MOVE.
HE'S THE KIND THAT WON'T QUIETLY SIT STILL AND ANALYZE HIS ENEMIES, BUT INSTEAD TELLS YOU IN THE FLESH TO GO AFTER HIM IF YOU WANT.
HE FINDS OPPORTUNITIES AND REVEALS HIMSELF OPENLY.
RAIN, DO YOU THINK THAT HIS CITIZENS ARE AWARE OF HIS TRUE FORM?
I DON'T THINK SO.
BUT IT'S A MATTER OF TIME.


AH.
YOU PEOPLE OF THE WAR COUNCILS SURE HAVE NO SENSE OF REFINEMENT.
OK.
WELL, WE'LL LEAVE THIS TALK FOR ANOTHER DAY.

I'LL SAVE THE PLEASURE OF DANCING WITH YOU FOR SOME OTHER TIME.
I'D LIKE TO DANCE WITH A PARTNER, BUT UNFORTUNATELY FOR YOU, I ALREADY HAVE A PRIOR ENGAGEMENT.


YOU LOOKED ENGROSSED IN YOUR CONVERSATION. I WONDER WHAT IT WAS?

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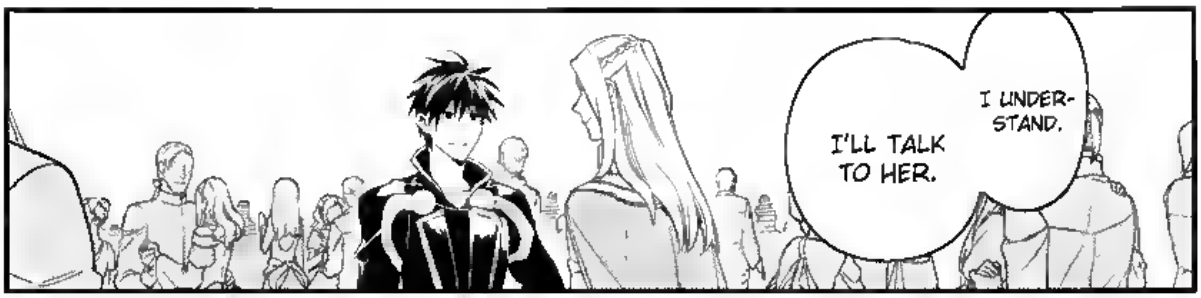
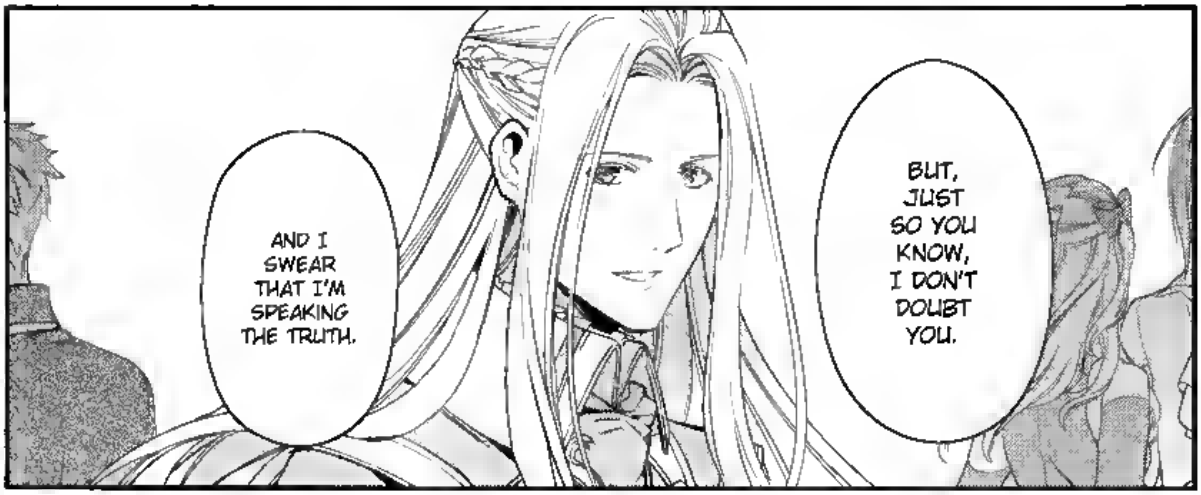
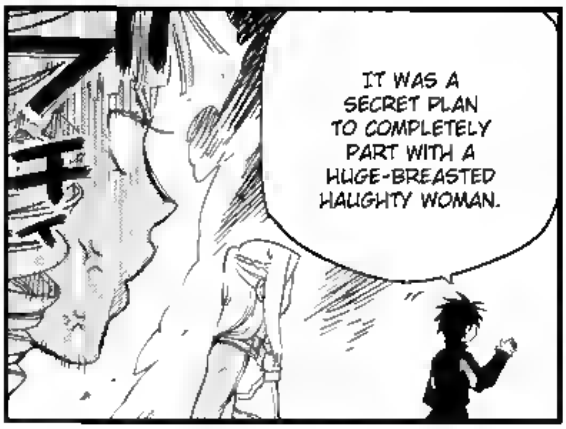
KNOW YOUR PLACE!
NOT ONLY ARE YOU IMPERTINENT, YOU ARE HIDING SECRETS FROM LORD RALPHUS AS WELL?
JUST A SMALL TALK ABOUT THE WORLD.
THEY WERE JUST ADMIRING HOW COMPATIBLE YOU TWO ARE WITH EACH OTHER.
NOW! COME WITH ME!
I KNOW THIS IS A LITTLE TOO SUDDEN, BUT I'D LIKE TO PRESENT FOLNIER AND THE OTHERS A SUM OF MONEY BEFORE THEY RETURN.
COULD YOU ASK YOUR GIRL-FRIEND TO HELP?
IT'S REALLY QUITE SUDDEN.

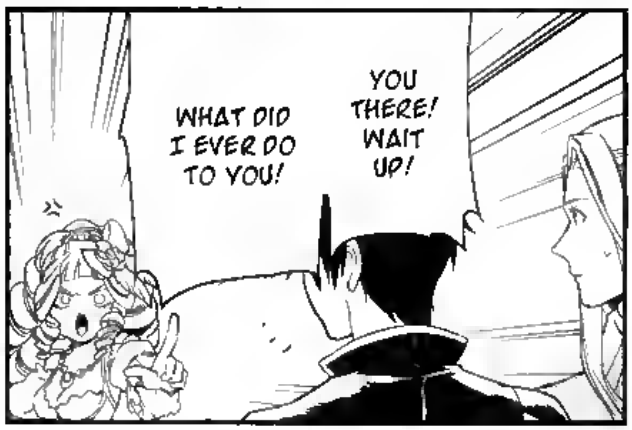
THIS TIME, OUR DEPARTURE WILL NOT BE BRINGING SYANDRYS ANY PROFITS.
AND AGAIN I'LL SAY THAT THIS DEFINITELY HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH FOLNIER'S DISAPPROVAL OF SELF-BENEFITS.
IF HER MAJESTY ALLOWS IT, I WOULDN'T MIND, BUT WHY MONEY?
A GIFT.
AS A CELEBRATION FOR OUR ALLIANCE, I INTEND FOR OUR SIDE TO BE THE ONE TO MAKE THE OUTCOME.
WHAT DO YOU THINK?
IF A SCHEMER LIKE MYSELF TELLS STORIES THAT ARE TOO GOOD TO BE TRUE, EVERYONE MIGHT BECOME WARY OF ME FOR FEAR THAT I WOULD HAVE SOMETHING UP MY SLEEVES.
AS FOR YOU, I KNOW THAT YOU ARE A PERSON OF GOOD FAITH.
OF COURSE I AGREE...
BUT WHY DON'T YOU JUST SAY IT DIRECTLY?

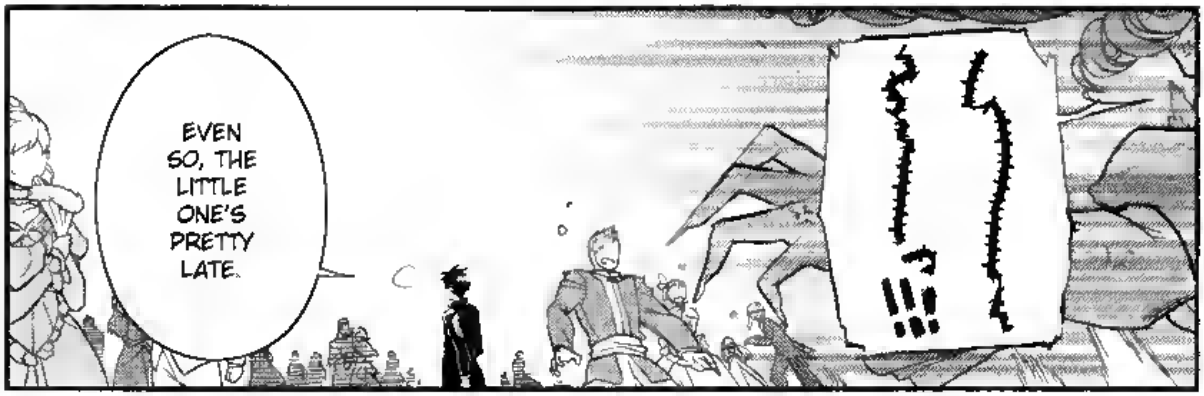

I'LL TALK TO HER.
I UNDER-STAND.


AND I SWEAR THAT I'M SPEAKING THE TRUTH.
BUT, JUST SO YOU KNOW, I DON'T DOUBT YOU.

THAT'S WHY WE ARE ABLE TO REMAIN AS CLOSE FRIENDS.
I KNOW.


IT WAS A SECRET PLAN TO COMPLETELY PART WITH A HUGE-BREASTED HAUGHTY WOMAN.


WHAT DID I EVER DO TO YOU!
YOU THERE! WAIT UP!


EVEN SO, THE LITTLE ONE'S PRETTY LATE.
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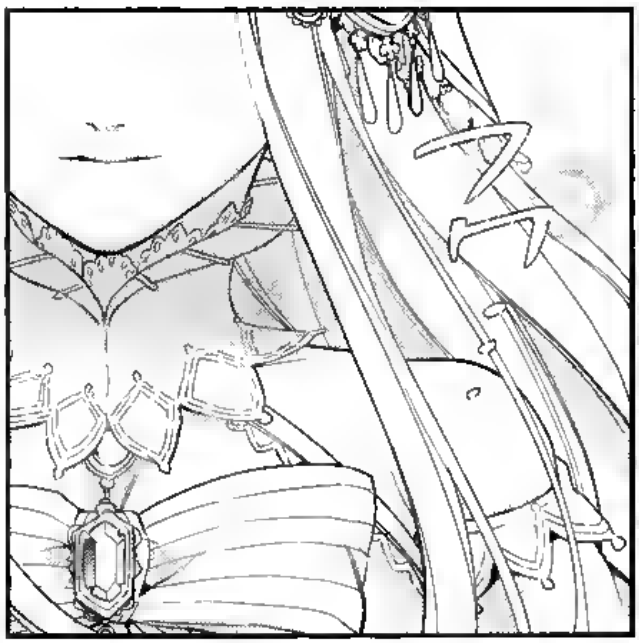

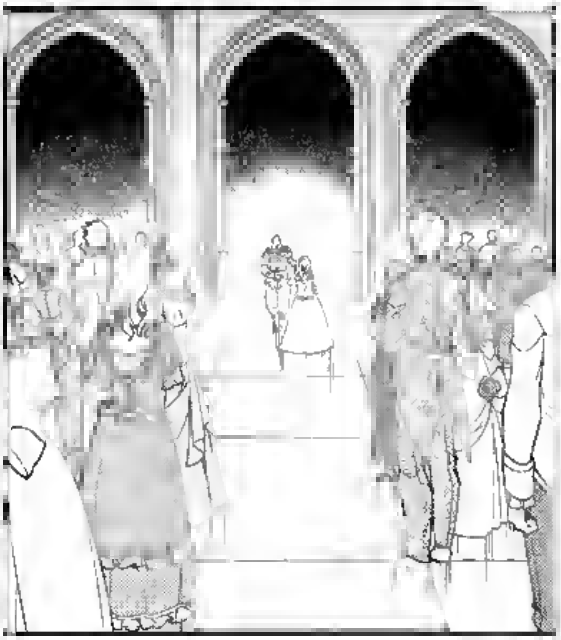

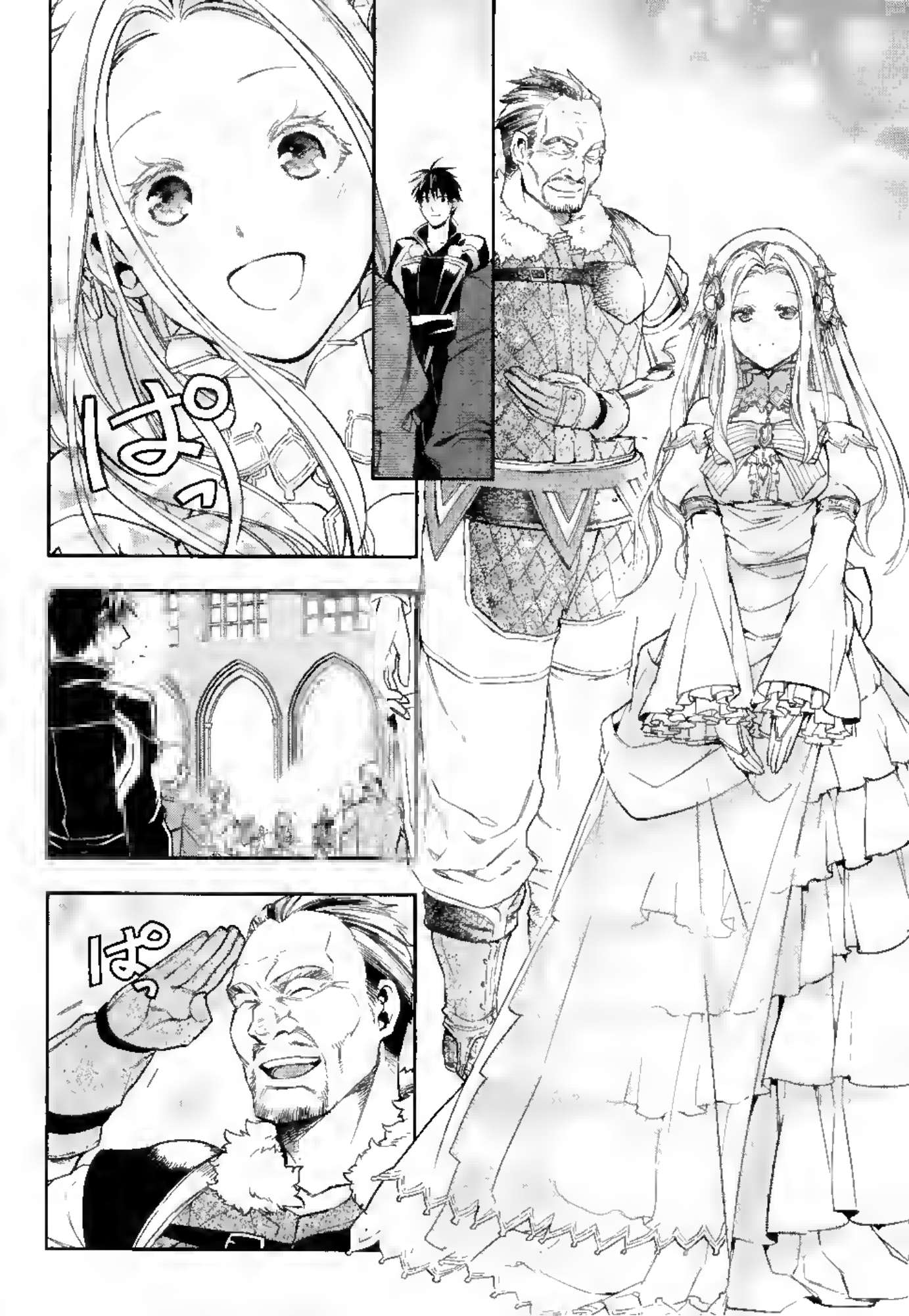
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WHAT WERE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
AH...NAH, IT'S JUST THAT SOMEHOW THIS IS JUST NOT LIKE ME TO DO THIS SORT OF THING...
THAT GRAMPS IS RUN-NING AWAY, HUH.
AREN'T WE A LITTLE TOO EXPOSED?

SOMEONE BROKE MY BARRIER!

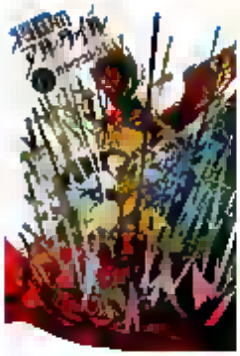
GUN-THER!
I'LL LEAVE THE PRINCESS TO YOU.
YES, SIR!
WHAT'S WRONG, JOE?
DID SOMETHING HAPPEN?
THIS PRESE-NCE...

LOOKS LIKE WE HAVE AN UNINVITED GUEST.

SENSE SCANS

NEEDS YOUR HELP!

EXPERIENCE NOT NECESSARY!



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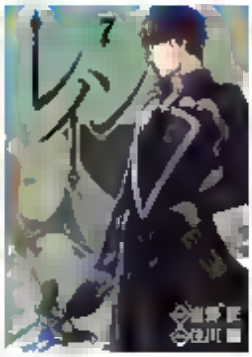

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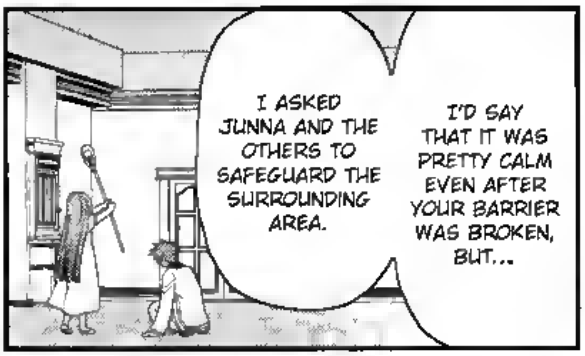
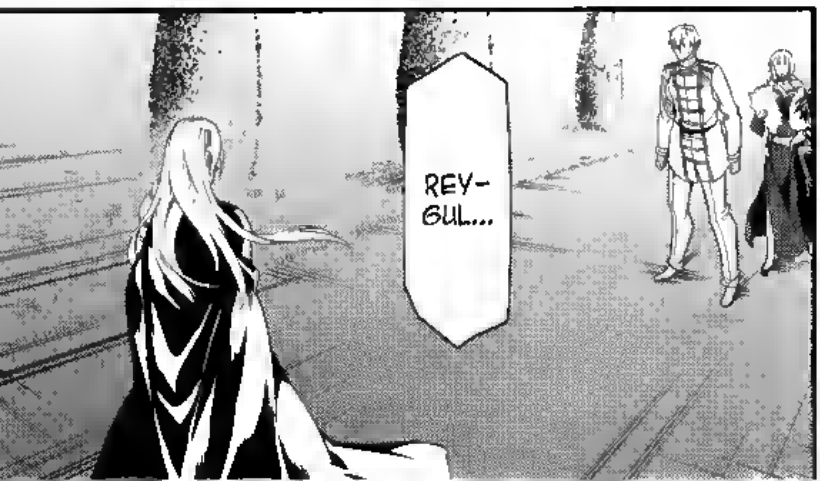
CHAPTER 39.
NIGHT OF THE BALL. (PART 2)

NO WONDER IT WAS THAT STRONG.
AH, I THOUGHT YOU WERE THE ONE WHO PUT THAT UP.
MUST YOU INTENTIONALLY DESTROY THE BARRIER I MADE?
I JUST WANTED TO SEE YOUR FACE.
I WOULDN'T CALL IT BUSINESS.
WHAT BUSINESS DO YOU HAVE TO HAVE COME ALL THE WAY HERE?
IT WAS THAT STRONG SO THAT THERE WOULDN'T BE ANY VICTIMS.
I CAME HERE TO TELL YOU THAT.
I'M ABOUT TO MAKE A MOVE VERY SOON.
IF ANYTHING AT ALL, I'M HERE TO WARN YOU IN ADVANCE.
HUH.
AFTER ALL, YOU'VE FINALLY GOTTEN A STRONGER FOOTHOLD.

YOU GUYS!

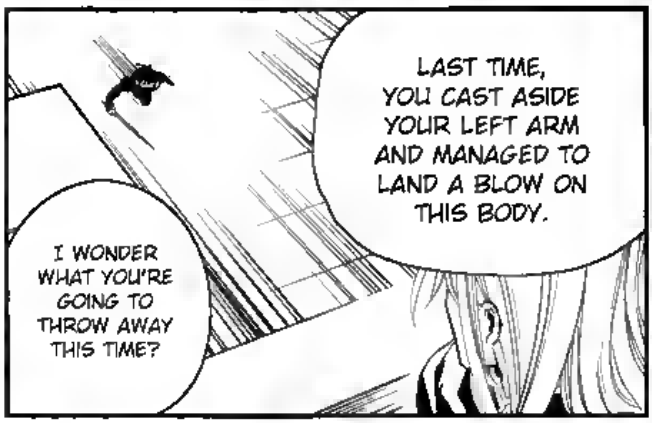

I ASKED JUNNA AND THE OTHERS TO SAFEGUARD THE SURROUNDING AREA.
I'D SAY THAT IT WAS PRETTY CALM EVEN AFTER YOUR BARRIER WAS BROKEN, BUT...

IT'S FINE.
HOW'S THE SITUATION INSIDE?


REY-GUL...

WHAT IS A PERSON WHO'S ONLY A HERO-BY-NAME PLANNING TO DO BY ENTERING THE FRONT LINES?
SO NOW YOU'RE CALLED "THE INVINCIBLE GENERAL", HUH...
JOE...
HAVE YOU FORGOTTEN HOW YOU TURNED TAIL AND RAN OFF WHEN YOU FOUGHT THE KING OF HEROES ONCE UPON A TIME?
YOU'RE NOT IN A POSITION TO SPEAK SO ARROGANTLY, YOU DEMON.
PLEASE DON'T MAKE ME LAUGH GIRL.
IT'S UNTHINKABLE TO CONSIDER SUCH A PERSON TO BE ON MY LEVEL.
THE ONE WHO FOUGHT HIM THE OTHER TIME WAS MERELY AN ERRAND BOY.

AH...
UH...
.....
URGH...
HAS YOUR BIG MOUTH STOPPED?
This isn't magic.
This is merely an assertion of his aura. For it to be this strong...


LAST TIME, YOU CAST ASIDE YOUR LEFT ARM AND MANAGED TO LAND A BLOW ON THIS BODY.
I WONDER WHAT YOU'RE GOING TO THROW AWAY THIS TIME?

I SUSPECTED AS MUCH...

AS IF I'M GOING TO THROW AWAY ANYTHING, YOU FOOL!

YOUR LEGS?
YOUR ARMS?

I'LL DESTROY YOUR COMPOSURE TILL I'M SATISFIED!

First strike:
A diagonal
slash from the
shoulder—

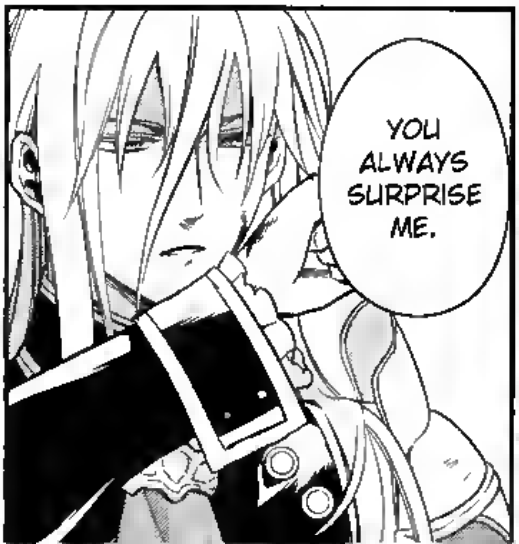
Changing his
pivot leg without
releasing the
force as he
maintains an
inclined tilt.

Second strike:
Horizontal slash.

THIS IS IT?

I COMPLETELY SAW THROUGH ALL YOUR MOVEMENTS.
LOOKS LIKE I OVERES-TIMATED YOU.

WHAT...
YOU SURE ABOUT THAT?


YOU ALWAYS SURPRISE ME.

Ah.

THEN, DIE SURPRISED!
I FINALLY REACHED YOU.
THIS TIME, DID YOU MAKE IT YOURSELF?
DO YOU KNOW, REYGUL?
THE COLOR OF YOUR MAGICAL POWER REVEALS YOUR INNER SELF.
IN OTHER WORDS, THAT CRIMSON BLADE...

YOU'RE RIGHT.
REVEALS THE INNER DESIRE OF ONE WHO YEARNS FOR BLOODSHED!

I NO LONGER HAVE ANY BUSINESS HERE.
I TOLD YOU THAT I CAME HERE TO SEE YOUR FACE.
ARE YOU GOING TO RUN?

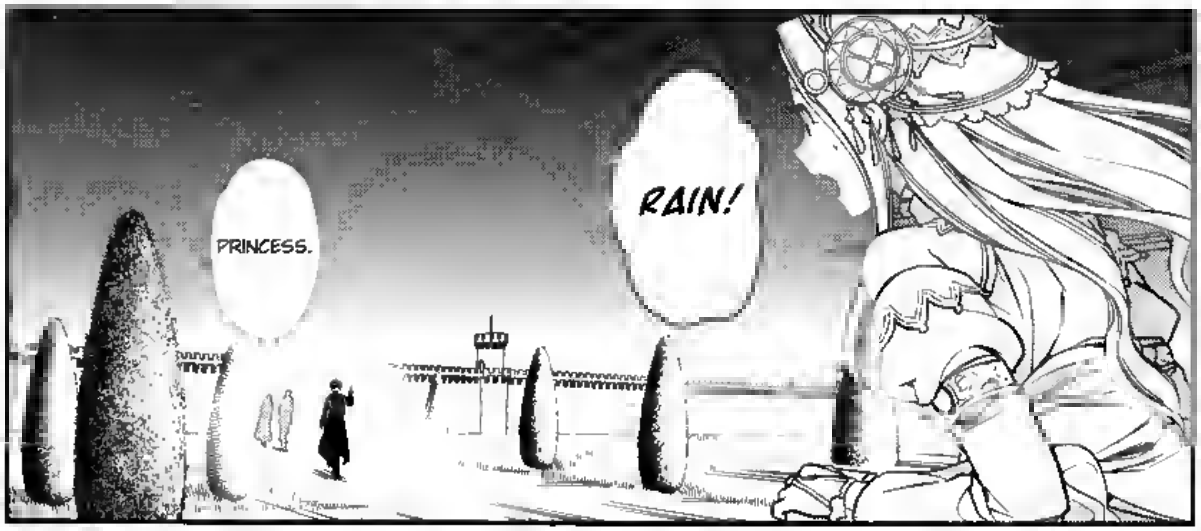
NOTHING
JUST THAT, IT HAS BEEN A WORTHWHILE TRIP.
WHAT'S SO FUNNY?
YOU HAVE GROWN WITHIN THE PAST FEW MONTHS.
DESPITE YOUR DIRECTLY FACING MY POWER AND INTENTION TO KILL, YOUR FIGHTING SPIRIT DID NOT WAVER AT ALL.
I AM MERELY PLEASED AT THAT ATTITUDE.
YOU NEITHER RAN NOR WERE YOU AFRAID.

"UNKNOWN GENIUS SWORDSMAN" OF THE PAST, WHO SHOOK THE CONTINENT OF THE NORTH ONCE UPON A TIME...
MAKE HASTE AND COME TO MY CASTLE.

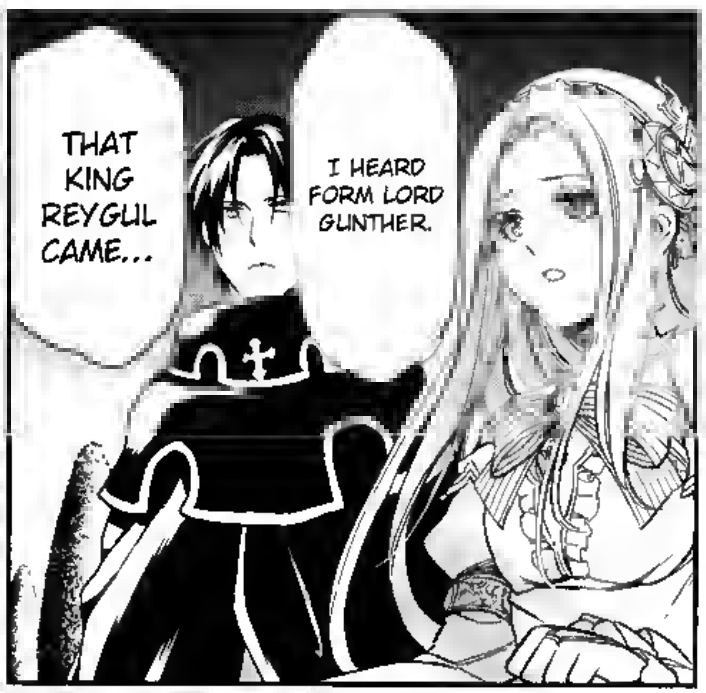
I'LL BE LOOKING FORWARD TO OUR NEXT MEETING.
RAIN.

WAIT!

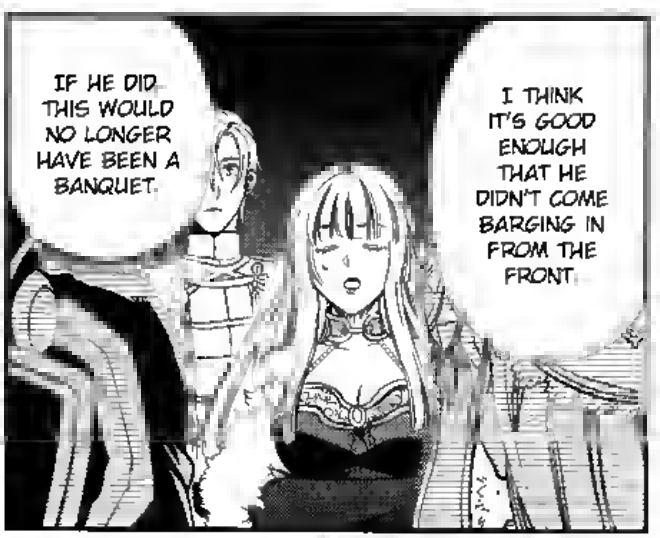
ARE YOU ALRIGHT, RAIN?
OF COURSE I AM.
I SHOULD BE ASKING THAT TO YOU GUYS INSTEAD.
HEY DIVINE GENERAL, DON'T LOOK SO WORN OUT.
I'M ASHAMED FOR THAT...


PRINCESS.
RAIN!

ARE YOU INJURED?
NOT AT ALL.
HE MERELY CAME TO JEER AT THE CELEBRATION OF THE CORONATION CEREMONY.


THAT KING REYGUL CAME...
I HEARD FORM LORD GUNTHER.

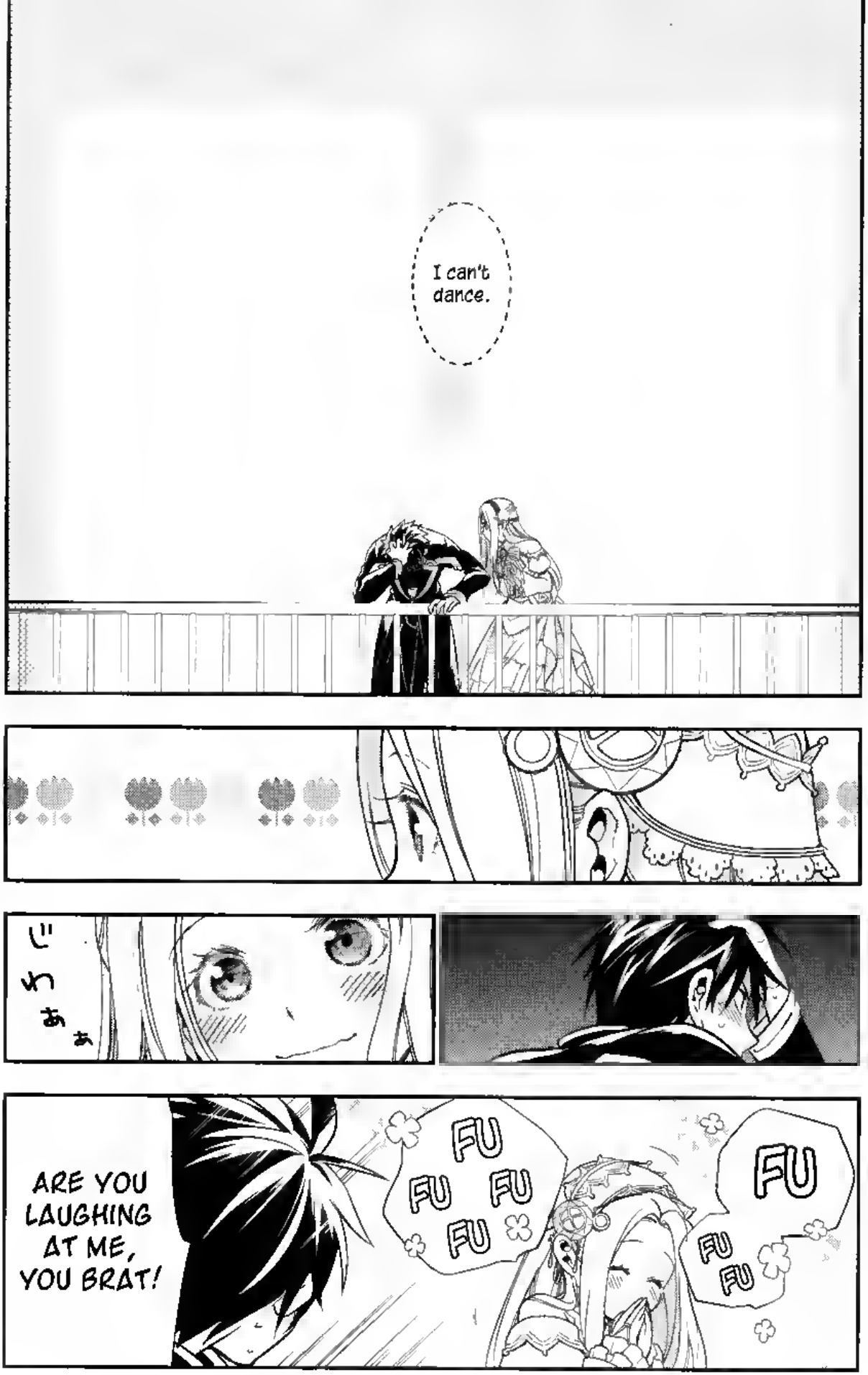
IT APPEARS THAT NONE OF THE GUESTS INSIDE NOTICED THE COMMOTION OUT HERE.


IF HE DID THIS WOULD NO LONGER HAVE BEEN A BANQUET.
I THINK IT'S GOOD ENOUGH THAT HE DIDN'T COME BARGING IN FROM THE FRONT.

BUT OF COURSE, IF THE GUESTS OF HONOR REMAIN MISSING, IT WOULD ONLY BE A MATTER OF TIME BEFORE THEY REALIZE THAT SOMETHING IS GOING ON.
AH.
RAIN?
YOU'RE NOT COMING BACK IN?

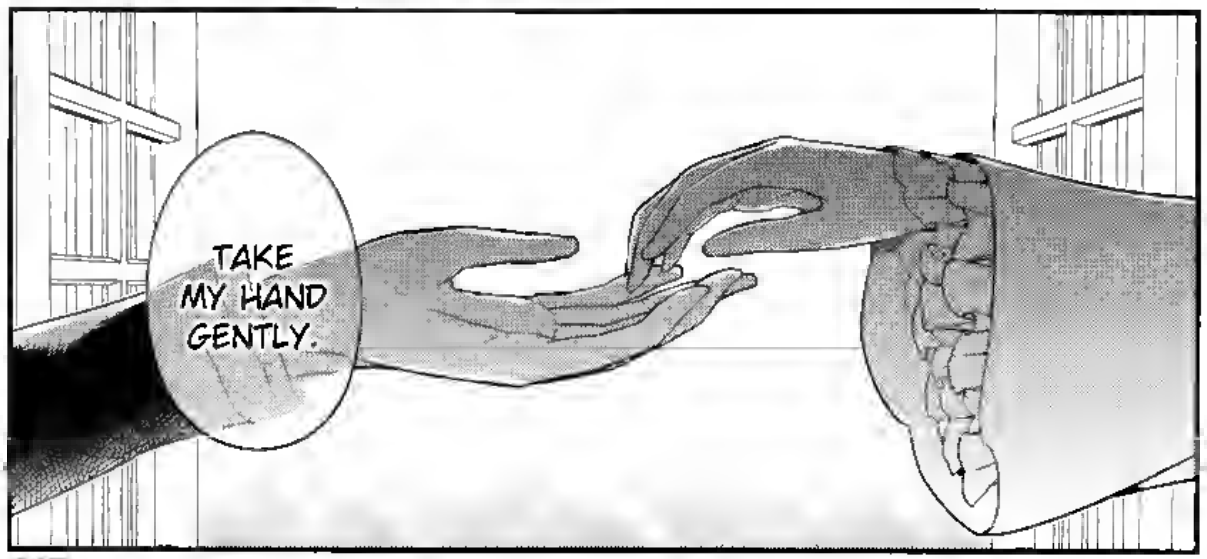
RAIN, AREN'T YOU THE ONE WHO PROPOSED TO HOLD THIS EVENT?
I'LL STAY HERE A LITTLE LONGER
AH... I'M FINE...
AH. HEY.
YOU MIGHT AS WELL ENJOY YOUR-SELF.
SINCE WE'RE HERE...
NO... JUST FOR TODAY, I HAVE TO CARE ABOUT HOW PEOPLE JUDGE ME...
YOU'RE NOT INTERESTED?

HEY, LITTLE ONE...
CAN YOU KEEP SECRETS?
Y...
YES.
THE SOLE WEAKNESS THAT A GENIUS LIKE ME WHO BRAGS OF BEING TALENTED IN BOTH THE MILITARY AND THE ARTS HAS...
I CAN'T AFFORD TO LET ANYONE HEAR OF THIS...
WHAT IS IT...
ACTUALLY...


I can't dance.
じゃわぁぁ
ARE YOU LAUGHING AT ME, YOU BRAT!
FU FU FU FU
FU FU FU

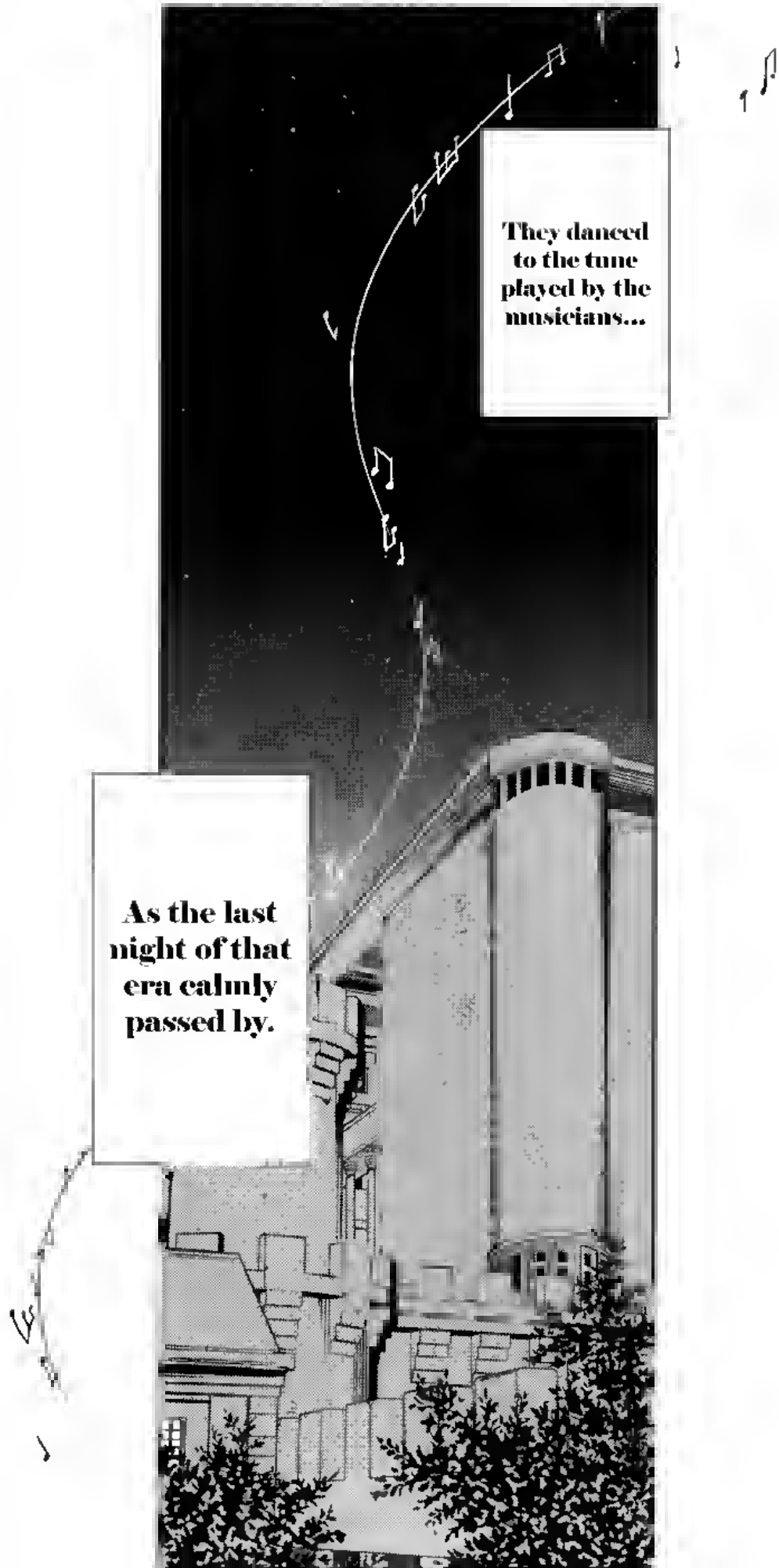
I'VE NEVER DONE IT BEFORE, SO I CAN'T HELP IT!
A PERSON WITH MOVEMENTS AND REFLEXES AS GOOD AS YOU SHOULDN'T HAVE ANY PROBLEM DOING IT.
I LEARNED TO DANCE AS WELL AS SINGING, SO LEAVE IT TO ME.

LET'S PRACTICE.


TAKE MY HAND GENTLY.

WELL...

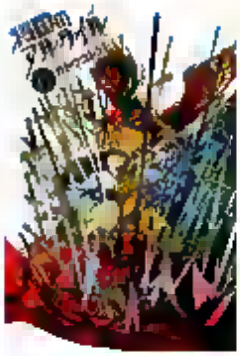
I GUESS, ONCE IN A WHILE ISN'T SO BAD.


They danced to the tune played by the musicians...
As the last night of that era calmly passed by.

SENSE SCANS

NEEDS YOUR HELP!

EXPERIENCE NOT NECESSARY!



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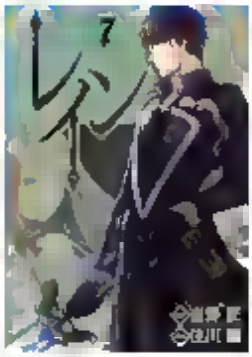

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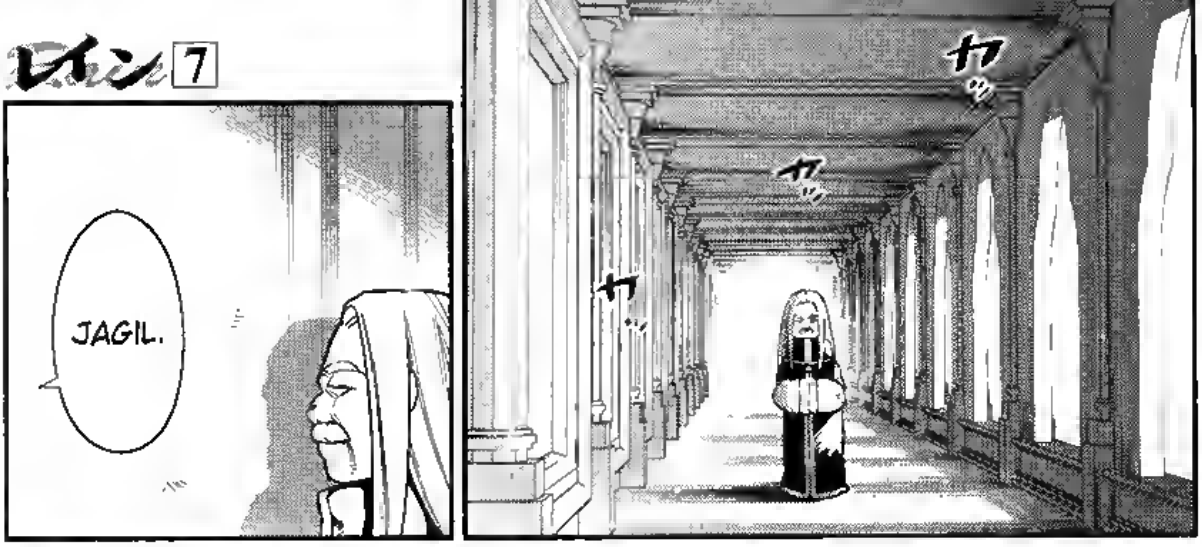
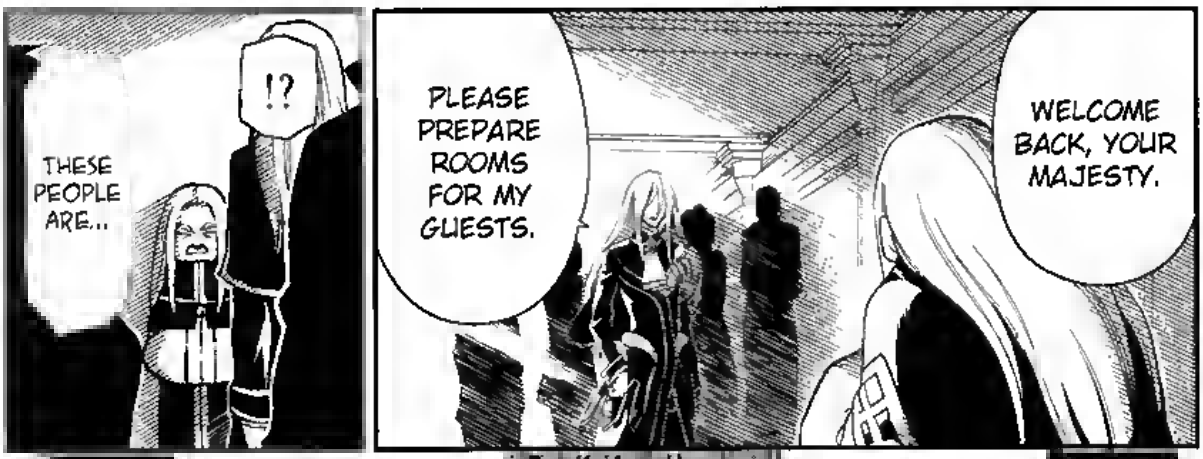




CHAPTER 40

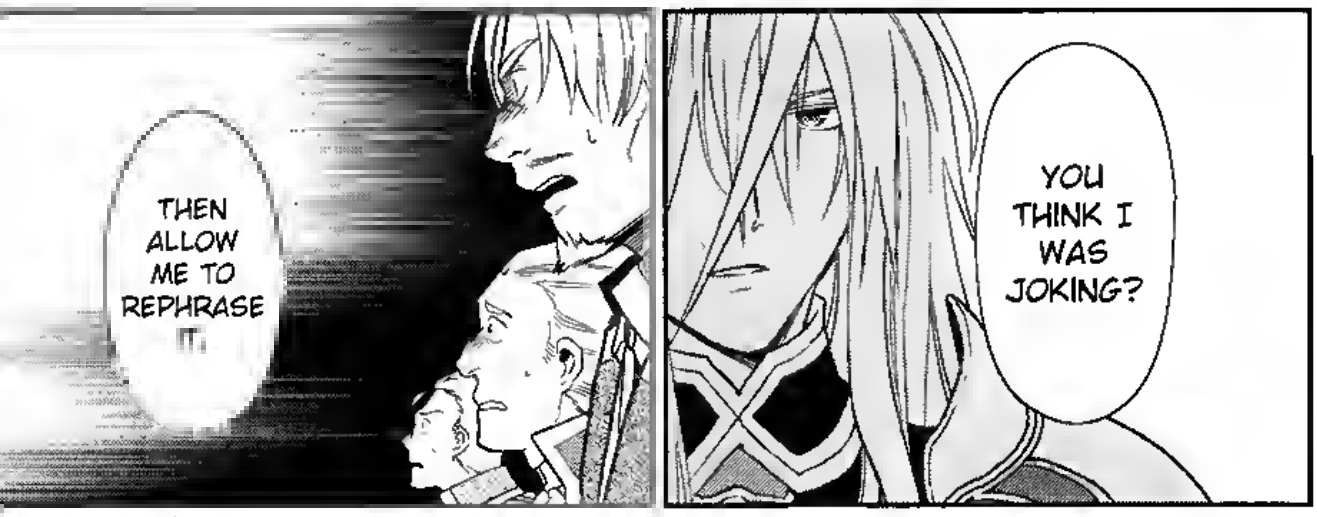
THE BEGINNING OF A NEW AGE.

OH, ONE MORE THING, JAGIL.
PLEASE SUMMON ALL THE HIGHEST-RANKING OFFICERS TO THE AUDIENCE ROOM.
YES... SIR?

THERE'S SOMETHING I HAVE TO TELL EVERYONE.

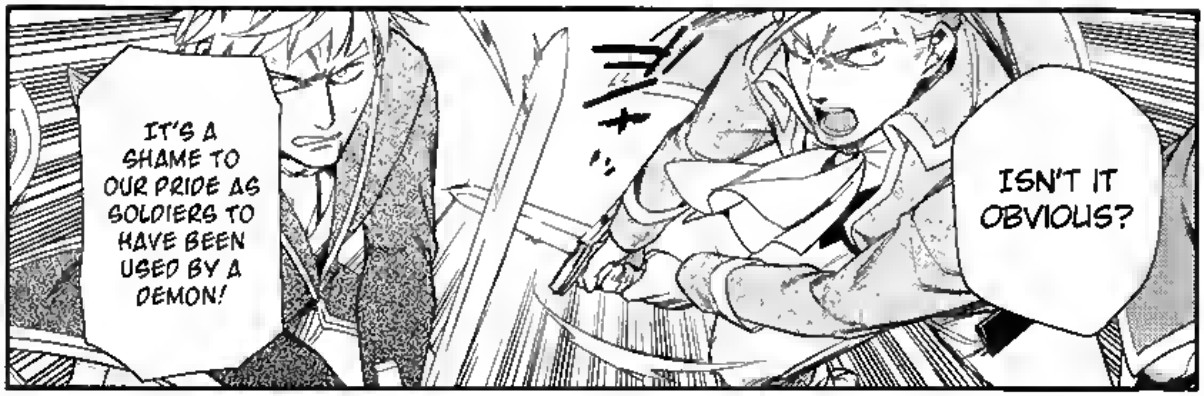
DID YOU JUST SAY...?
WHAT...

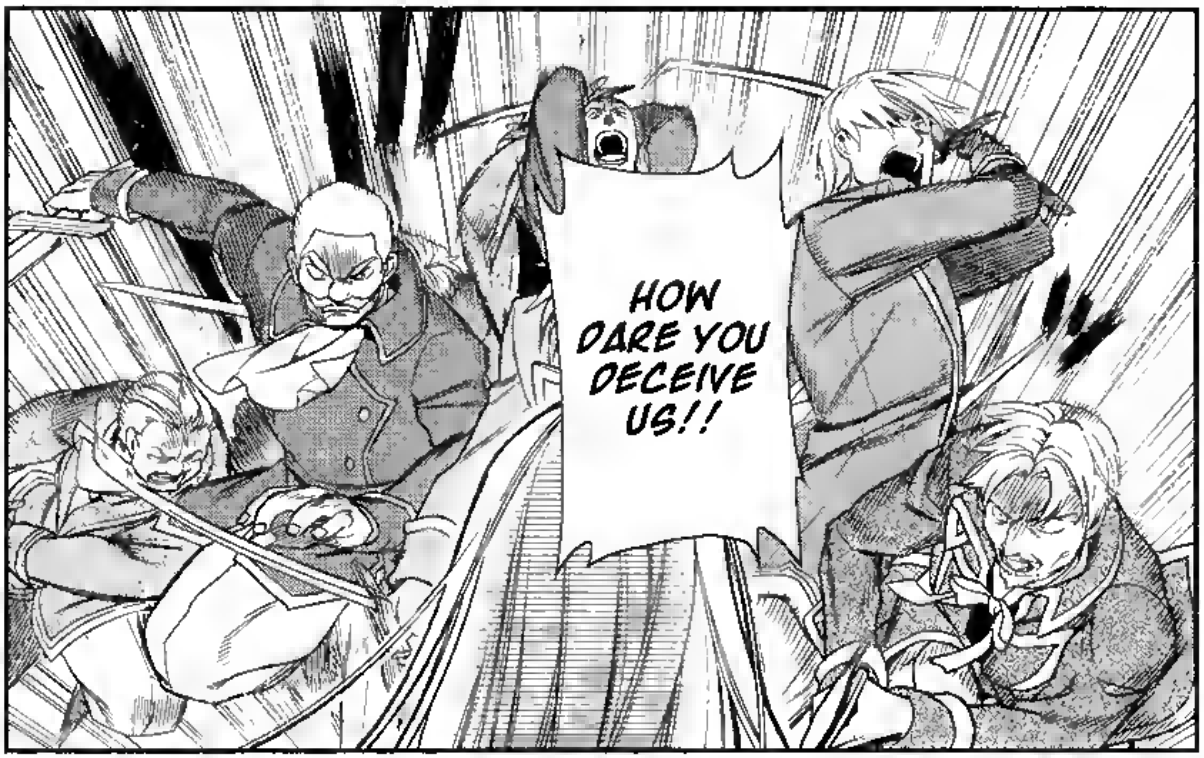
INDEED! IF THIS IS A JOKE, PLEASE STOP THIS AT ONCE!
SOME THINGS JUST CANNOT BE TREATED AS A JOKE!
YOUR MAJESTY!

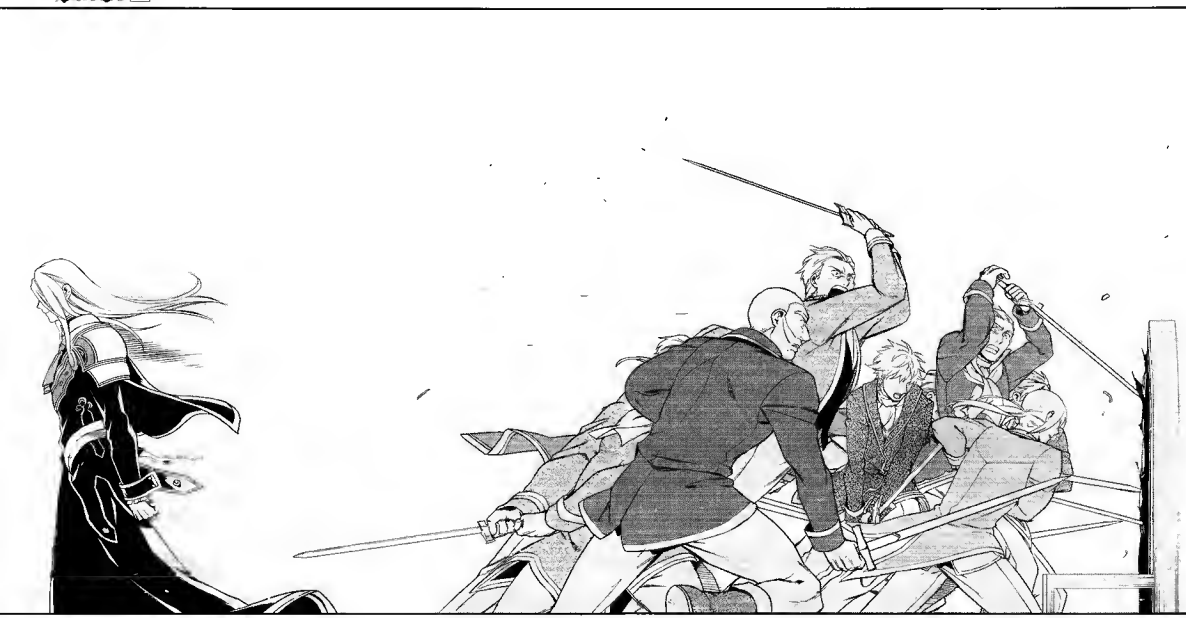

THEN ALLOW ME TO REPHRASE IT.
YOU THINK I WAS JOKING?

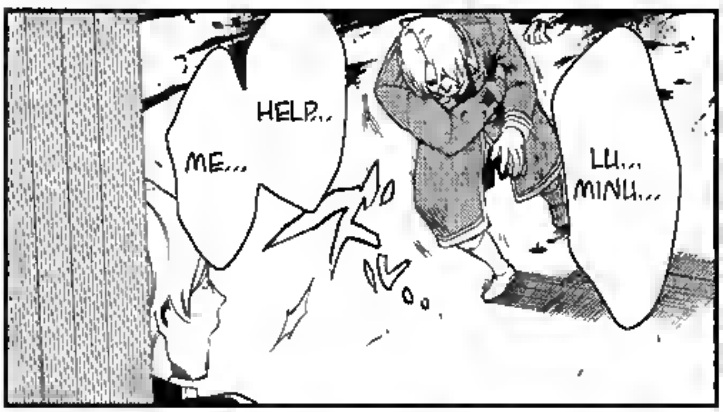
THE ONE WHO DEFEATED THE PREVIOUS KING, ARAMIS DINADAN GRAVIS, AND ASCENDED THE THRONE.
THE ONE WHO HAS BEEN USING ALL OF YOU UP TILL NOW IS NOT A HUMAN.
BUT A DEMON.
I WOULD LIKE TO KNOW THOSE...
WHO ARE WILLING TO SWEAR LOYALTY AND THOSE WHO WILL DENY ME AFTER THIS REVELATION.

YOUR MAJESTY
I SEE.
I, GANOA, HAVE LONG SINCE KNOWN OF YOUR MAJESTY'S TRUE FORM.
NOW THAT EVERYONE FINALLY UNDERSTANDS, I'D SAY IT'S A CALL FOR CELEBRATION.
AND THE REST?


IT'S A SHAME TO OUR PRIDE AS SOLDIERS TO HAVE BEEN USED BY A DEMON!
ISN'T IT OBVIOUS?


HOW DARE YOU DECEIVE US!!



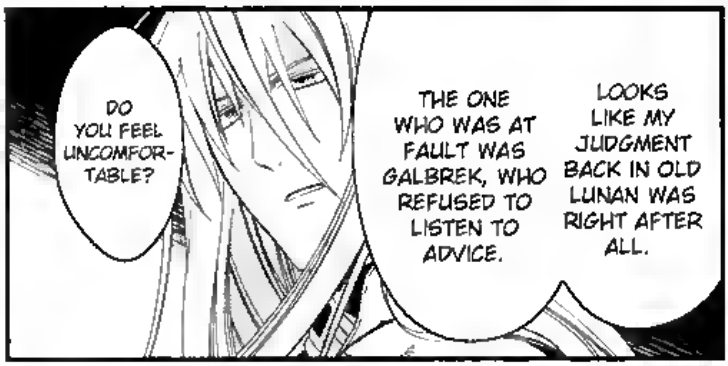

HELP...
ME...
LU...
MINU...

YOUR MAJES-TY!
HE NO LONGER HAS...

I THOUGHT THAT YOU COULD HAVE DONE A LITTLE BETTER.
WELL, NOT THAT THERE ARE ANY PIECES I WOULD REGRET LOSING, BUT...

NO...

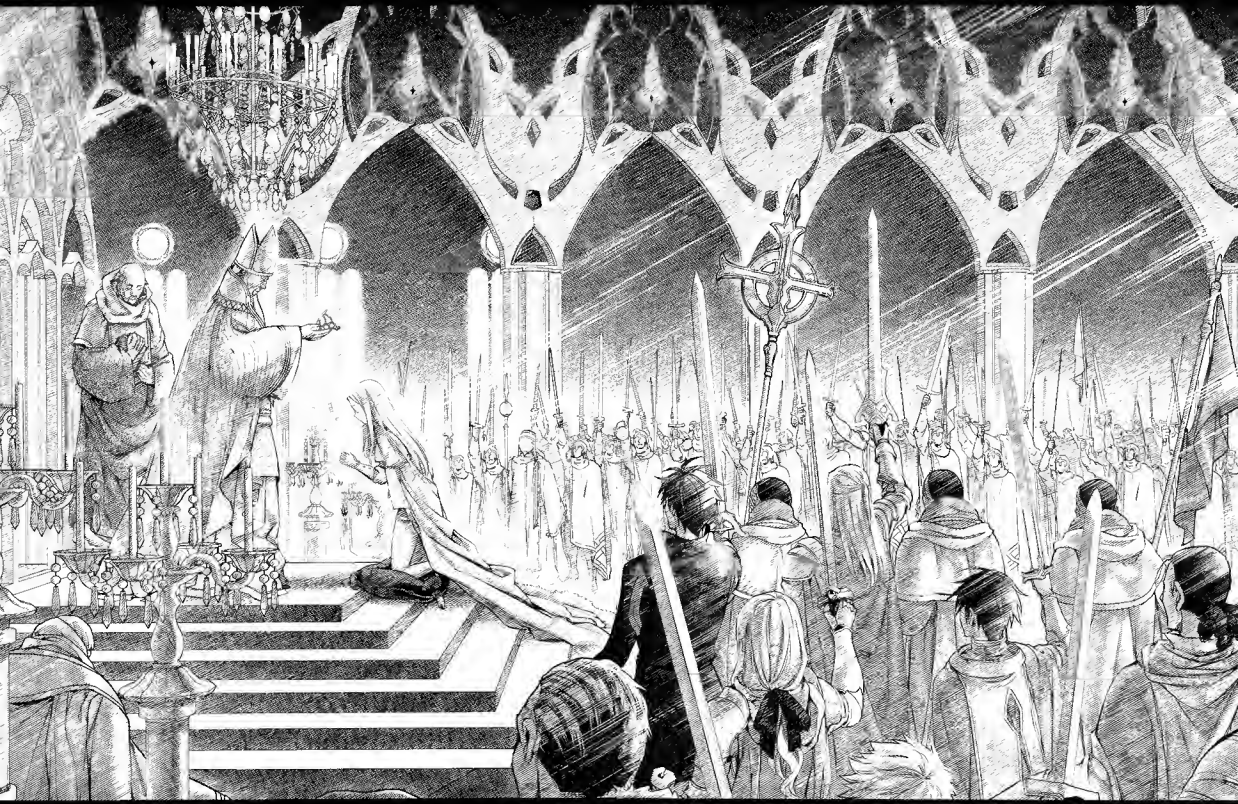
DID YOU SAY SOME-THING?


DO YOU FEEL UNCOMFOR-TABLE?
THE ONE WHO WAS AT FAULT WAS GALBREK, WHO REFUSED TO LISTEN TO ADVICE.
LOOKS LIKE MY JUDGMENT BACK IN OLD LUNAN WAS RIGHT AFTER ALL.

FROM TODAY ONWARD, YOU WILL TAKE OVER GALBREK'S POSITION AS GENERAL.
LUMINUS.
!?

YOUR MAJESTY, I M AFRAID THINGS WILL GET DIFFICULT.

ALL OF MURGENIA IS ABOUT TO ENTER A NEW ERA.
NO..
ZARMIN...
I'VE PREPARED REPLACE-MENTS.
DO NOT FRET.
NOT TO MENTION THAT YOU LET IMPORTANT PEOPLE DIE THAT EASILY...FROM THIS POINT ONWARD, WE WILL FACE OBSTACLES.
THAT AFFAIR, COUPLED WITH WHAT JUST HAPPENED.

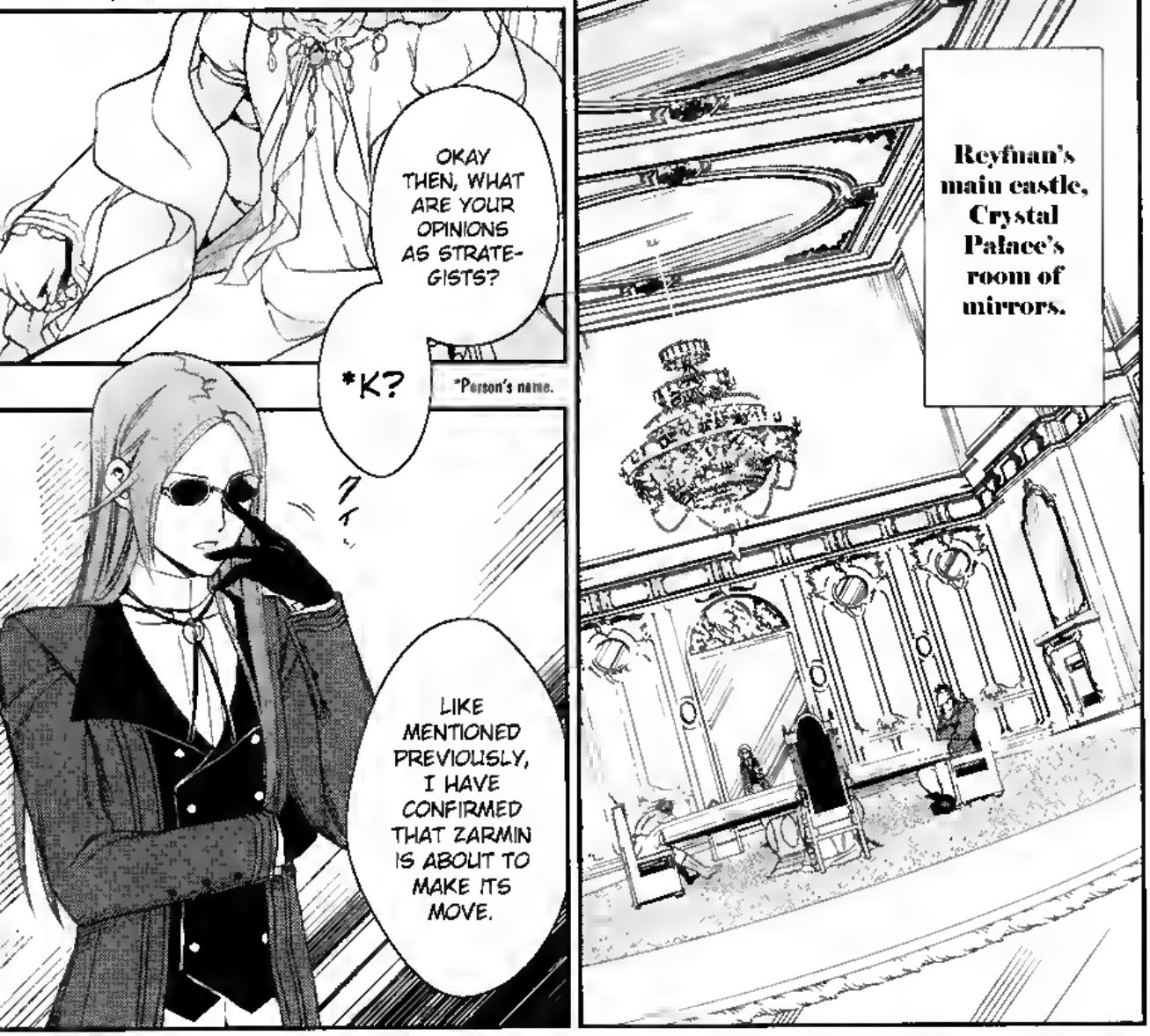


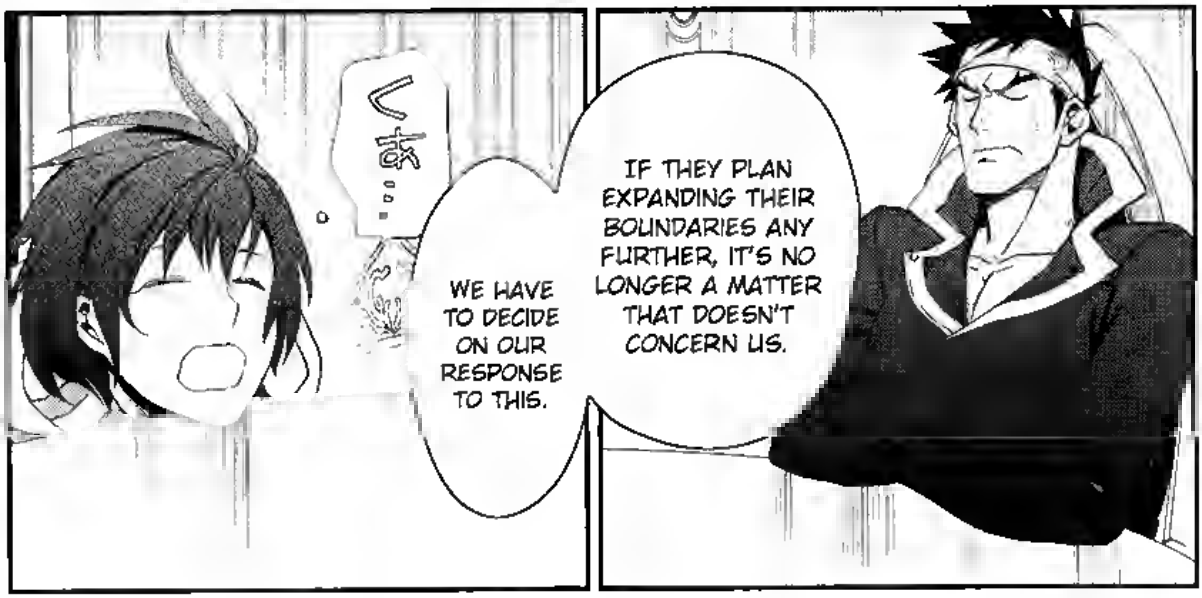
There were other females who subdued turmoil in their own country before becoming its new ruler.

Reyfuan, a huge and the oldest kingdom, located at the center of the great continent.

The enthronement of the Princess, Saaya Saline Reyfuan, was just a recent event.

With the assistance of three of her commanders, she crushed the treacherous hope of the Prime Minister to ascend the throne.


Reyfnan's main castle, Crystal Palace's room of mirrors.
OKAY THEN, WHAT ARE YOUR OPINIONS AS STRATEGISTS?
*K?
*Person's name.
LIKE MENTIONED PREVIOUSLY, I HAVE CONFIRMED THAT ZARMIN IS ABOUT TO MAKE ITS MOVE.

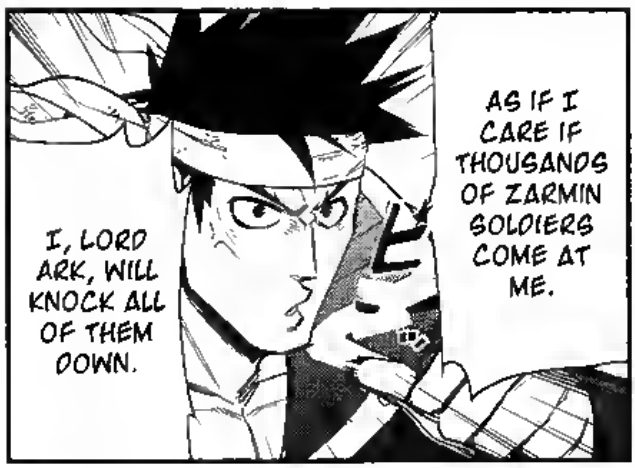

IF THEY PLAN EXPANDING THEIR BOUNDARIES ANY FURTHER, IT'S NO LONGER A MATTER THAT DOESN'T CONCERN US.
WE HAVE TO DECIDE ON OUR RESPONSE TO THIS.

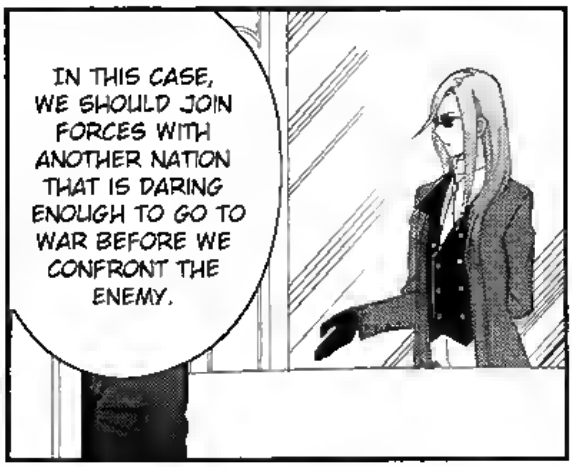
WE HAVE THREE OPTIONS.
IF WE WANT OUR EXISTENCE TO REMAIN SUPERIOR..
THE BEST MEASURE WOULD BE TO PAY A VISIT TO ZARMIN WITHOUT DELAY AND BE OBSEQUIOUS TO THEM.
SAY WHAT!?
AS IF WE'RE GOING TO GIVE IN WITHOUT A FIGHT!
ARK, YOU'RE NOISY.
THE WORST PLAN WILL BE TO LEAVE EVERYTHING AS IT IS AND KEEP ON WATCHING.
IT'LL BE TOO LATE BY THE TIME THEY NOTICE,
SO THIS IS THE WORST.

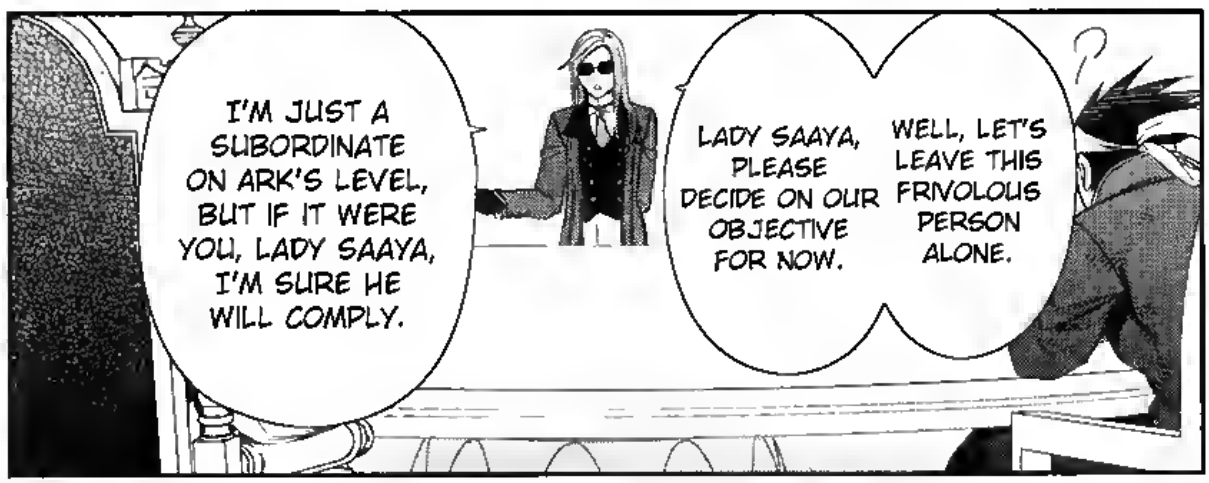
FELIS, YOU DON'T EVEN NEED TO ASK.

YOU MENTIONED THE BEST AND THE WORST... SO WHAT'S IN BETWEEN?

A WAR WITH ZARMIN.


I, LORD ARK, WILL KNOCK ALL OF THEM DOWN.
AS IF I CARE IF THOUSANDS OF ZARMIN SOLDIERS COME AT ME.

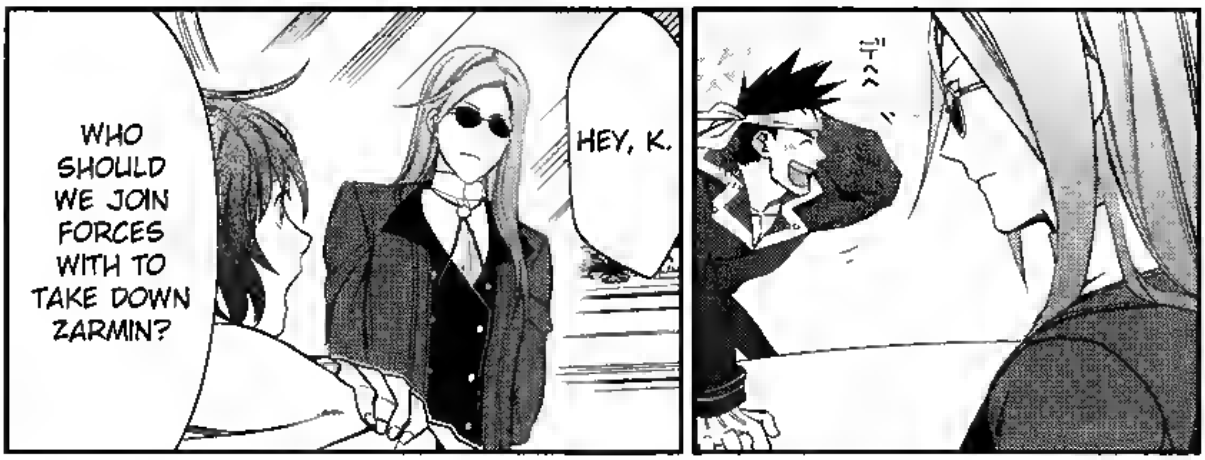

IN THIS CASE, WE SHOULD JOIN FORCES WITH ANOTHER NATION THAT IS DARING ENOUGH TO GO TO WAR BEFORE WE CONFRONT THE ENEMY.

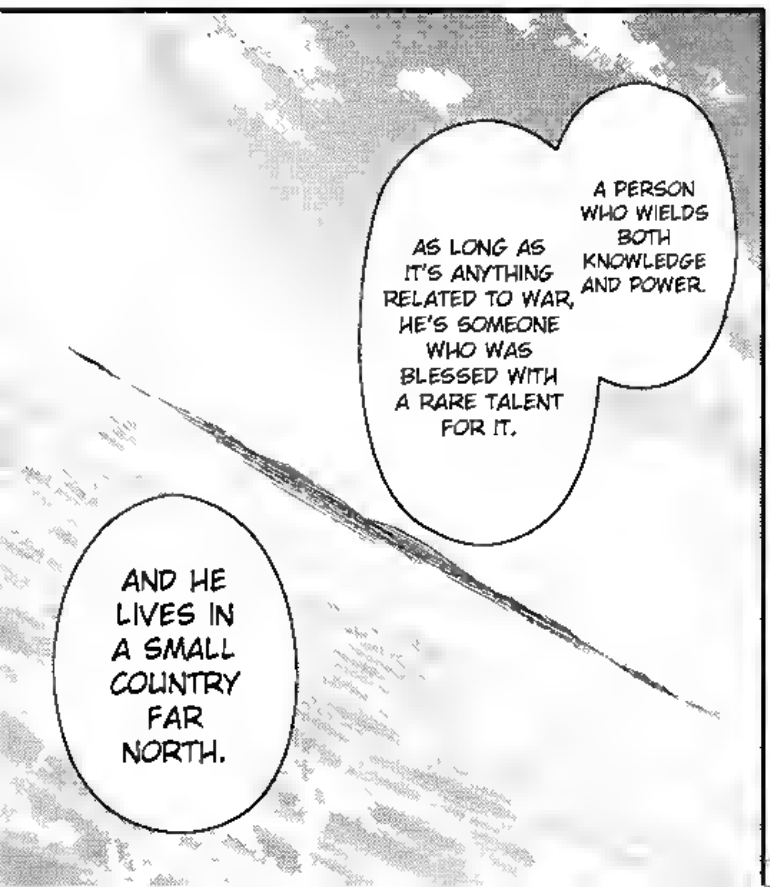

I'M JUST A SUBORDINATE ON ARK'S LEVEL, BUT IF IT WERE YOU, LADY SAAYA, I'M SURE HE WILL COMPLY.
LADY SAAYA, PLEASE DECIDE ON OUR OBJECTIVE FOR NOW.
WELL, LET'S LEAVE THIS FRIVOLOUS PERSON ALONE.

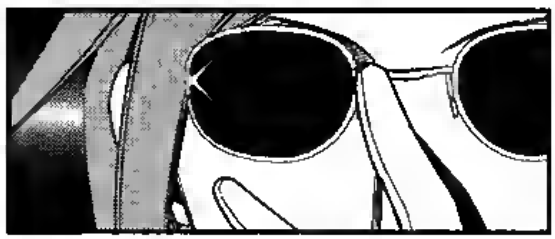
WE, THE ROYAL FAMILY OF THE REYFUAN KINGDOM, HAVE BEEN RULING THIS LAND FOR FORTY-SEVEN GENERATIONS.
AND DURING THAT PERIOD, WE HAVE NEVER EVEN ONCE YIELD IN TO ANOTHER NATION.

EVEN IF THEY DON'T WISH FOR IT...
SHOULD THE TALK FAIL, WE WILL HAVE NO CHOICE BUT TO FIGHT IT OUT.

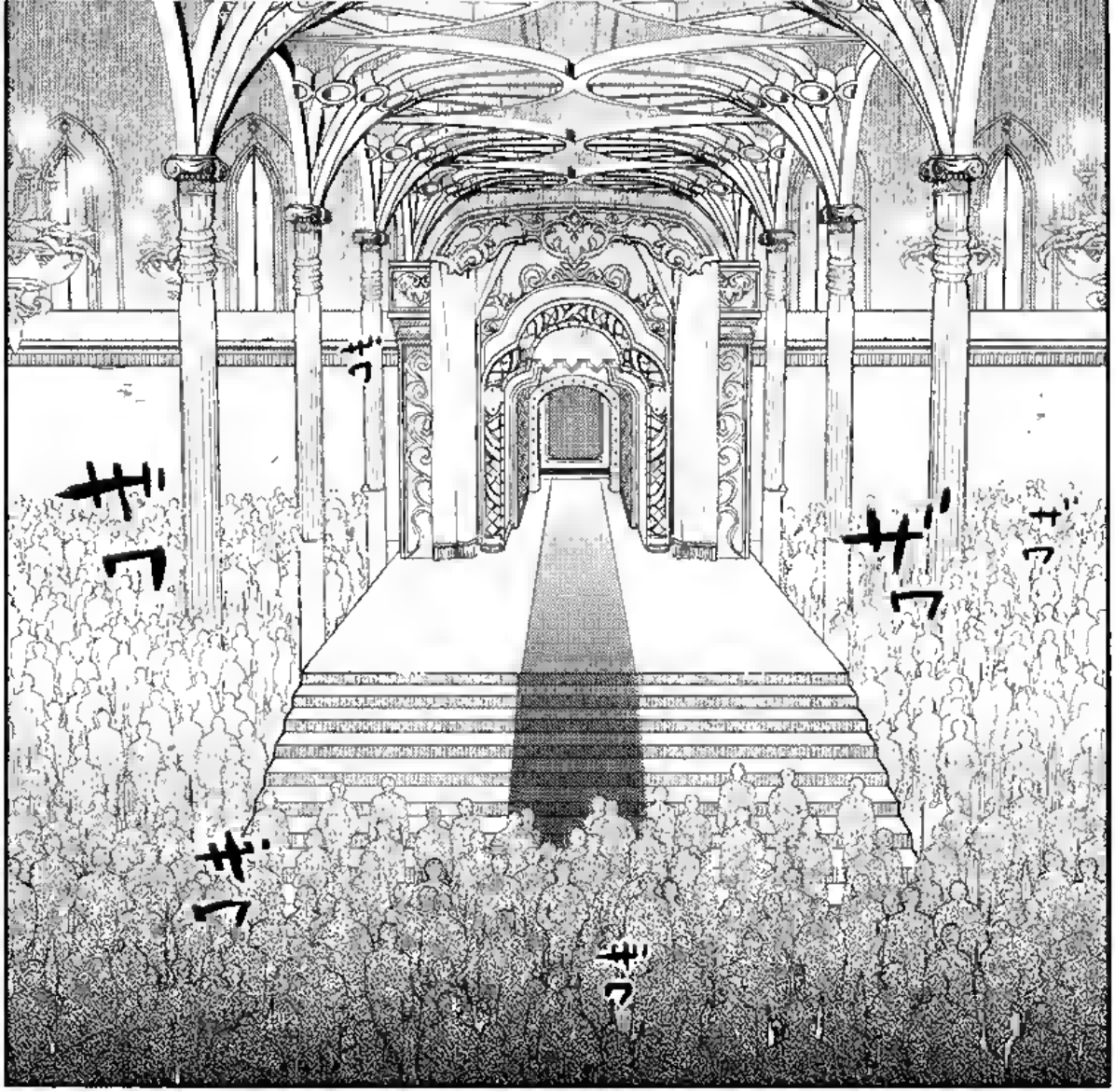
WOW, SO RELIABLE.
LEAVE EVERYTHING TO ME!
AS EXPECTED OF SAA... I MEAN LADY SAAYA!


WHO SHOULD WE JOIN FORCES WITH TO TAKE DOWN ZARMIN?
HEY, K.


AND HE LIVES IN A SMALL COUNTRY FAR NORTH.
AS LONG AS IT'S ANYTHING RELATED TO WAR, HE'S SOMEONE WHO WAS BLESSED WITH A RARE TALENT FOR IT.
A PERSON WHO WIELDS BOTH KNOWLEDGE AND POWER.



I HAVE A CERTAIN NATION IN MIND.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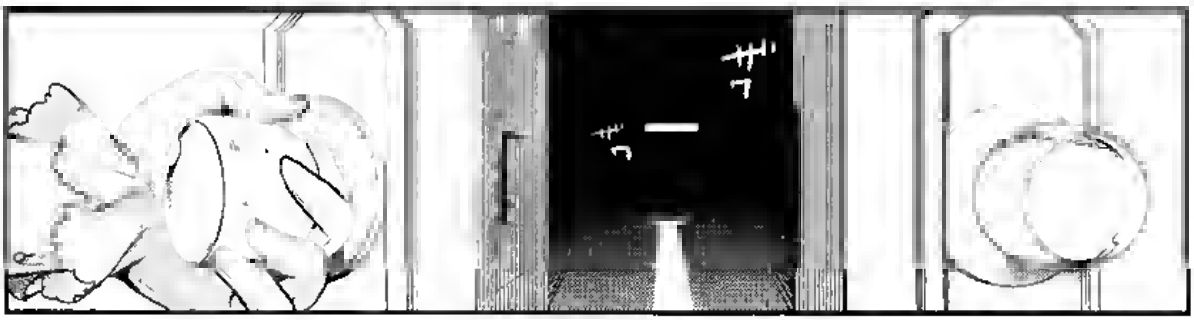
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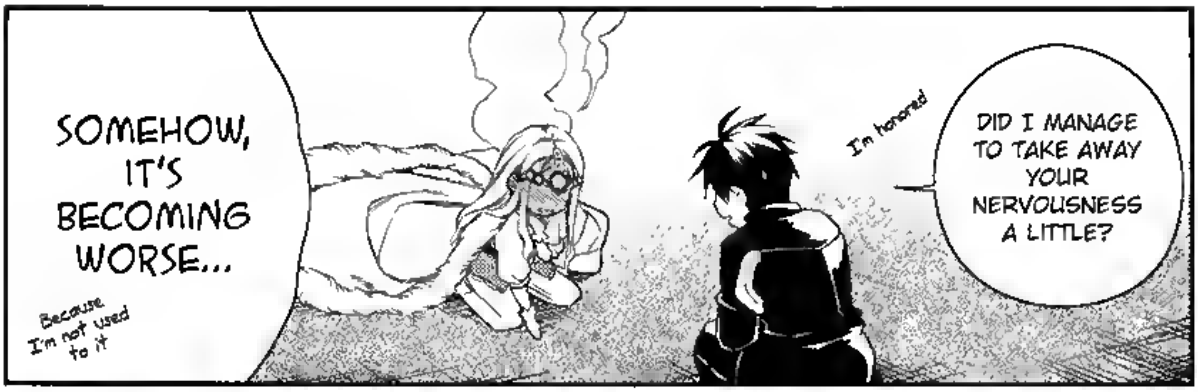
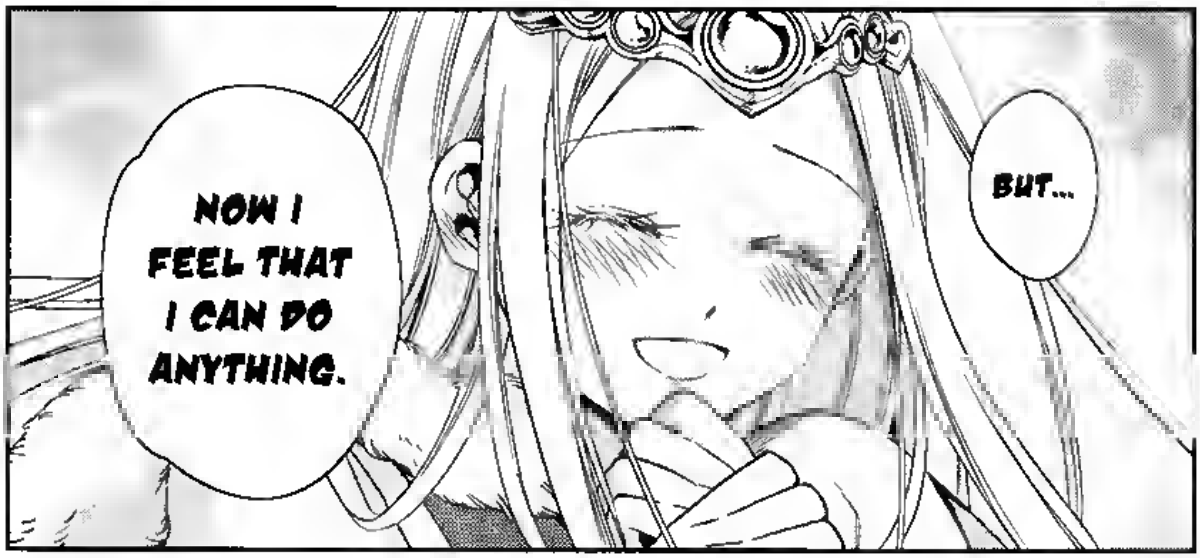
IF IT BOTHERS YOU CAN TRY TO THINK OF THEM AS A BUNCH OF CLOTHED POTATOES.
TRUE ENOUGH, THERE ARE MORE PEOPLE NOW AS COMPARED TO THE PREVIOUS CEREMONY, BUT...
I TOLD YOU NOT TO BE SO STIFF.
PROMISE?
I CAN'T BE RIGHT BESIDE YOU, BUT I WILL WATCH YOU FROM THE SIDELINES.
HMM?
YOU STILL HAVE YET TO FULFILL THAT PROMISE!
AH.

"If I can finish this test without getting hurt..."
AH...
NO, THAT'S NOT TRUE.
SO I GUESS, IT DOESN'T COUNT...
AH... BUT I FELL UNCONSCIOUS THE MOMENT I RETURNED TO GALFORT...
IT'S IMPOSSIBLE TO DO IT NOW.
YOUR MAKE-UP BE RUINED.
THAT'S WHY...

PLEASE MAKE DO WITH THIS FOR NOW...


SOMEHOW, IT'S BECOMING WORSE...
Because I'm not used to it
I'm honored
DID I MANAGE TO TAKE AWAY YOUR NERVOUSNESS A LITTLE?


NOW I FEEL THAT I CAN DO ANYTHING.
BUT...

THAT'S THE SPIRIT.

FROM HERE ON AS WELL...
WOULD YOU WATCH ME FROM NEARBY?
RAIN.

Rain...
From now on, your life will be full of decisions and choices, won't it?
However...
"Then I only have one thing to say."
YEAH.
AS LONG AS YOU NEED ME, NO MATTER WHAT KIND OF OBSTACLES LIE AHEAD OF US, I WILL GO WITH YOU.

THE PATH THAT YOU HAVE CHOSEN WILL NOT BE A MISTAKE.
I HOPE THAT YOU WILL MOVE FORWARD WITHOUT GETTING LOST.

IF IT'S YOU, I KNOW THAT YOU'LL BE FINE.
OKAY.

The small country of the north celebrated the birth of their new leader.
As the larger nations started making their moves based on their individual speculations.
As the loveliest princess in history was made to ascend the throne...
the history of Murgenia entered a new age.
MURGENIA

The Characters ミュールゲニアの人々 of Murgenia

レイン

平民出のサンクワール上将軍で主人公。本人曰く「世界最強の男」らしい。

ラルファス

サンクワール上将軍。建国祖の五家の一角。

ナイゼル

ラルファスの副官。物静かな騎士。

レ ニ

レインの副官で千人隊長。臆病な性格だが腕は確か。

セルフィー

見習い騎士の貧乏娘。レインの覇気を感じられる才能を持つ。ユーリと仲良し。

シェルファ

サンクワール君主。レインに好意を寄せる絶世の美少女。

ギュンター

主に諜報や工作を担当する、レインの股肱の臣。常に苦い顔をしている。

グエン

ラルファスの副官。山賊のような容姿の巨漢。

セノア

レインの副官で千人隊長。レインの行動によく癇癪を起こしている。

ユーリ

ザーマインの元間諜。激しい給金交渉の末、レインの仲間になる。

ガサラム

かつて名を上げた騎士。過去にレインと関わりがあるらしいのだが…。

サンクワール -Sunkwoll-

同盟関係

ザーマイン -Zarmine-

レイグル

大国ザーマインを統べる王。自分が魔族であることを明かす。

ジャギル

レイグルの片腕にして、ザーマイン宰相、文官筆頭。

シャンドリス Syandrys

フォルニーア

シャンドリスの皇帝。

ジョウ

シャンドリスの大将軍。

シング

フォルニーアの臣下で、古参の将軍。

セイル

爽やかな見掛けの若き将軍で騎士。剣技や魔法を巧みに使いこなす。

ジュンナ

セイルの義妹。秘めた力が絶大な天才魔法使い。

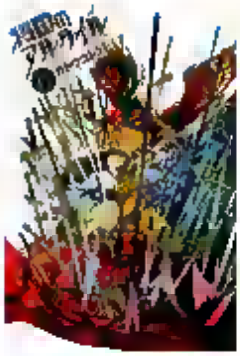
ザルツ

シャンドリスの将軍。ジュンナに滅法弱い。

SENSE SCANS

NEEDS YOUR HELP!

EXPERIENCE NOT NECESSARY!



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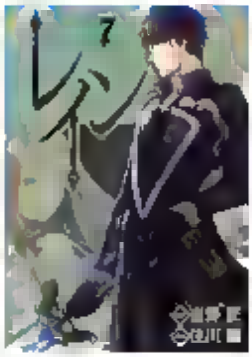

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